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THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS.

VOL. I.

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THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS;

OR,

An Essay towards an Analysis of the Principles by which Men naturally judge concerning the Conduct and Character, first of their Neighbours, and afterwards of themselves.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A Dissertation on the Origin of Languages.

By ADAM SMITH, LL. D.
Fellow of the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh;
One of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Customs in Scotland;
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University of Glasgow.

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297

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ADVERTISEMENT.

SINCE the first publication of the THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS, which was so long ago as the beginning of the year 1759, several corrections, and a good many illustrations of the doctrines contained in it, have occurred to me. But the various occupations in which the different accidents of my life necessarily involved me, have till now prevented me from revising this work with the care and attention which I always intended. The reader will find the principal alterations which I have made in this New Edition, in the last chapter of the third Section of Part First; and in the four first Chapters of Part Third. Part Sixth, as it stands in this New Edition, is altogether new. In Part Seventh, I have brought together the greater part of the different passages concerning the Stoical Philosophy, which, in the former Editions, had been scattered about in different parts of the work. I have likewise endeavoured to explain more fully, and examine more dis-

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

PART I.

Of the PROPRIETY of ACTION.

SECTION I.

Of the SENSE of PROPRIETY. Page 1

CHAP. I. *Of* SYMPATHY. - - *ibid.*

CHAP. II. *Of the pleasure of mutual sympathy.* 12

CHAP. III. *Of the manner in which we judge of the propriety or impropriety of the affections of other men, by their concord or dissonance with our own.* - - 18

CHAP. IV. *The same subject continued.* - - 25

CHAP. V. *Of the amiable and respectable virtues.* 35

SEC-

SECTION II.

Of the Degrees of the different Paſſions which are conſiſtent with Propriety. Page 43

CHAP. I. *Of the Paſſions which take their origin from the body.* - - - - 44

CHAP. II. *Of thoſe Paſſions which take their origin from a particular turn or habit of the Imagination.* - 53

CHAP. III. *Of the unſocial Paſſions.* - - 60

CHAP. IV. *Of the ſocial Paſſions.* - - 71

CHAP. V. *Of the ſelfiſh Paſſions.* - - 75

SECTION III.

Of the Effects of Proſperity and Adverſity upon the Judgment of Mankind with regard to the Propriety of Action: and why it is more eaſy to obtain their Approbation in the one ſtate than in the other. - 83

CHAP. I. *That though our sympathy with sorrow is generally a more lively sensation than our sympathy with joy, it commonly falls much more short of the violence of what is naturally felt by the person principally concerned.* Page 83

CHAP. II. *Of the origin of Ambition, and of the distinction of Ranks.* - - - 97

CHAP. III. *Of the corruption of our moral sentiments, which is occasioned by this disposition to admire the rich and the great, and to despise or neglect persons of poor and mean condition.* - - - 119

PART II.

Of MERIT and DEMERIT; or of the Objects of REWARD and PUNISHMENT.

SECTION I.

Of the SENSE of MERIT and DEMERIT. 130

CHAP. I. *That whatever appears to be the proper object of gratitude appears to deserve reward; and that, in*

in the same manner, whatever appears to be the proper object of resentment, appears to deserve punishment. Page 132

CHAP. II. *Of the proper objects of gratitude and resentment.* - - - - 136

CHAP. III. *That where there is no approbation of the conduct of the person who confers the benefit, there is little sympathy with the gratitude of him who receives it: and that, on the contrary, where there is no disapprobation of the motives of the person who does the mischief, there is no sort of sympathy with the resentment of him who suffers it.* - - - 141

CHAP. IV. *Recapitulation of the foregoing Chapters.* 145

CHAP. V. *The analysis of the sense of Merit and Demerit.* - - - 148

SECTION II.

Of Justice and Beneficence. - 157

CHAP. I. *Comparison of those two virtues.* - ibid

CHAP. II. *Of the sense of Justice, of Remorse, and of the consciousness of Merit.* - - 166

CHAP. III. *Of the utility of this constitution of Nature.* - - - 174

SEC-

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL 13

SECTION III.

Of the Influence of Fortune upon the Sentiments of Mankind, with regard to the Merit or Demerit of Actions. - Page 188

CHAP. I. *Of the causes of this influence of Fortune.* 191

CHAP. II. *Of the extent of this influence of Fortune.* 199

CHAP. III. *Of the final cause of this irregularity of Sentiments.* - - - - 216

PART III.

Of the Foundation of our Judgments concerning our own Sentiments and Conduct, and of the Sense of Duty.

CHAP. I. *Of the Principle of Self-approbation and of Self-disapprobation.* - - - 225

CHAP. II. *Of the love of Praise, and of that of Praise-worthiness; and of the dread of Blame, and of that of Blame-worthiness.* - - Page 233

CHAP. III. *Of the Influence and Authority of Conscience.* 272

CHAP. IV. *Of the Nature of Self-deceit, and of the Origin and Use of general Rules.* - - 320

CHAP. V. *Of the influence and authority of the general Rules of Morality, and that they are justly regarded as the Laws of the Deity.* - - 331

CHAP. VI. *In what cases the Sense of Duty ought to be the sole principle of our conduct; and in what cases it ought to concur with other motives.* - - 353

PART IV.

Of the EFFECT of UTILITY upon the Sentiment of Approbation.

CHAP. I. *Of the beauty which the appearance of* UTILITY *bestows upon all the Productions of art, and of the extensive influence of this species of Beauty.* - 373

CHAP.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
संस्कृति मंत्रालय · भारत सरकार

15
CSL

CHAP. II. *Of the beauty which the appearance of Utility beſtows upon the characters and actions of men; and how far the perception of this beauty may be regarded as one of the original principles of approbation.* - - - Page 392

THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART I.

Of the Propriety of Action.

Conſiſting of Three Sections.

SECTION I.

Of the Sense of Propriety.

CHAP. I.

Of Sympathy.

How ſelfiſh ſoever man may be ſuppoſed, there are evidently ſome principles in his nature, which intereſt him in the fortune of others, and render their happineſs neceſſary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleaſure of ſeeing it. Of this kind is pity or compaſſion, the emotion

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
GSL 17

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which we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. That we often derive sorrow from the sorrow of others, is a matter of fact too obvious to require any instances to prove it; for this sentiment, like all the other original passions of human nature, is by no means confined to the virtuous and humane, though they perhaps may feel it with the most exquisite sensibility. The greatest ruffian, the most hardened violator of the laws of society, is not altogether without it.

As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation. Though our brother is upon the rack, as long as we ourselves are at our ease, our senses will never inform us of what he suffers. They never did, and never can, carry us beyond our own person, and it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations. Neither can that faculty help us to this any other way, than by representing to us what would be our own, if we were in his case. It is the impressions of our own senses only, not those of his, which our imaginations

Neither is it thoſe circumſtances only, which create pain or ſorrow, that call forth our fellow-feeling. Whatever is the paſſion which ariſes from any object in the perſon principally concerned, an analogous emotion ſprings up, at the thought of his ſituation, in the breaſt of every attentive ſpectator. Our joy for the deliverance of thoſe heroes of tragedy or romance who intereſt us, is as ſincere as our grief for their diſtreſs, and our fellow-feeling with their miſery is not more real than that with their happineſs. We enter into their gratitude towards thoſe faithful friends who did not deſert them in their difficulties; and we heartily go along with their reſentment againſt thoſe perfidious traitors who injured, abandoned, or deceived them. In every paſſion of which the mind of man is ſuſceptible, the emotions of the by-ſtander always correſpond to what, by bringing the caſe home to himſelf, he imagines ſhould be the ſentiments of the ſufferer.

Pity and compaſſion are words appropriated to ſignify our fellow-feeling with the ſorrow of others. Sympathy, though its meaning was, perhaps, originally the ſame, may now, however, without much impropriety, be made uſe of to denote our fellow-feeling with any paſſion whatever.

Upon ſome occaſions ſympathy may ſeem to ariſe merely from the view of a certain emotion in another perſon. The paſſions, upon ſome occaſions, may ſeem to be tranſfuſed from one man to another, inſtantaneouſly, and antecedent to any knowledge of what excited them in the perſon principally concerned. Grief and joy, for example, ſtrongly expreſſed in the look and geſtures of any one, at once affect the ſpectator with ſome degree of a like painful or agreeable emotion. A ſmiling face is, to every body that ſees it, a cheerful object; as a ſorrowful countenance, on the other hand, is a melancholy one.

This, however, does not hold univerſally, or with regard to every paſſion. There are ſome paſſions of which the expreſſions excite no ſort of ſympathy, but before we are acquainted with what gave occaſion to them, ſerve rather to diſguſt and provoke us againſt them. The furious behaviour of an angry man is more likely to exaſperate us againſt himſelf than againſt his enemies. As we are unacquainted with his provocation, we cannot bring his caſe home to ourſelves, nor conceive any thing like the paſſions which it excites. But we plainly ſee what is the ſituation of thoſe with whom he is angry, and to what

ginations copy. By the imagination we place ourſelves in his ſituation, we conceive ourſelves enduring all the ſame torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in ſome meaſure the ſame perſon with him, and thence form ſome idea of his ſenſations, and even feel ſomething which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them. His agonies, when they are thus brought home to ourſelves, when we have thus adopted and made them our own, begin at laſt to affect us, and we then tremble and ſhudder at the thought of what he feels. For as to be in pain or diſtreſs of any kind excites the moſt exceſſive ſorrow, ſo to conceive or to imagine that we are in it, excites ſome degree of the ſame emotion, in proportion to the vivacity or dulneſs of the conception.

That this is the ſource of our fellow-feeling for the miſery of others, that it is by changing places in fancy with the ſufferer, that we come either to conceive or to be affected by what he feels, may be demonſtrated by many obvious obſervations, if it ſhould not be thought ſufficiently evident of itſelf. When we ſee a ſtroke aimed and juſt ready to fall upon the leg or arm of another perſon, we naturally ſhrink and draw back our own leg or our own arm; and when it does

fall, we feel it in ſome meaſure, and are hurt by it as well as the ſufferer. The mob, when they are gazing at a dancer on the ſlack rope, naturally writhe and twiſt and balance their own bodies, as they ſee him do, and as they feel that they themſelves muſt do if in his ſituation. Perſons of delicate fibres, and a weak conſtitution of body, complain, that in looking on the ſores and ulcers which are expoſed by beggars in the ſtreets, they are apt to feel an itching or uneaſy ſenſation in the correſpondent part of their own bodies. The horror which they conceive at the miſery of thoſe wretches affects that particular part in themſelves more than any other; becauſe that horror ariſes from conceiving what they themſelves would ſuffer, if they really were the wretches whom they are looking upon, and if that particular part in themſelves was actually affected in the ſame miſerable manner. The very force of this conception is ſufficient, in their feeble frames, to produce that itching or uneaſy ſenſation complained of. Men of the moſt robuſt make obſerve, that in looking upon ſore eyes they often feel a very ſenſible ſoreneſs in their own, which proceeds from the ſame reaſon; that organ being in the ſtrongeſt man more delicate than any other part of the body is in the weakeſt.

Neither

what violence they may be expoſed from ſo enraged an adverſary. We readily, therefore, ſympathize with their fear or reſentment, and are immediately diſpoſed to take part againſt the man from whom they appear to be in ſo much danger.

If the very appearances of grief and joy inſpire us with ſome degree of the like emotions, it is becauſe they ſuggeſt to us the general idea of ſome good or bad fortune that has befallen the perſon in whom we obſerve them: and in theſe paſſions this is ſufficient to have ſome little influence upon us. The effects of grief and joy terminate in the perſon who feels thoſe emotions, of which the expreſſions do not, like thoſe of reſentment, ſuggeſt to us the idea of any other perſon for whom we are concerned, and whoſe intereſts are oppoſite to his. The general idea of good or bad fortune, therefore, creates ſome concern for the perſon who has met with it, but the general idea of provocation excites no ſympathy with the anger of the man who has received it. Nature, it ſeems, teaches us to be more averſe to enter into this paſſion, and, till informed of its cauſe, to be diſpoſed rather to take part againſt it.

Even our ſympathy with the grief or joy of another, before we are informed of the

cauſe of either, is always extremely imperfect. General lamentations, which expreſs nothing but the anguiſh of the ſufferer, create rather a curioſity to inquire into his ſituation, along with ſome diſpoſition to ſympathize with him, than any actual ſympathy that is very ſenſible. The firſt queſtion which we aſk is, What has befallen you? Till this be anſwered, though we are uneaſy both from the vague idea of his misfortune, and ſtill more from torturing ourſelves with conjectures about what it may be, yet our fellow-feeling is not very conſiderable.

Sympathy, therefore, does not ariſe ſo much from the view of the paſſion, as from that of the ſituation which excites it. We ſometimes feel for another, a paſſion of which he himſelf ſeems to be altogether incapable; becauſe, when we put ourſelves in his caſe, that paſſion ariſes in our breaſt from the imagination, though it does not in his from the reality. We bluſh for the impudence and rudeneſs of another, though he himſelf appears to have no ſenſe of the impropriety of his own behaviour; becauſe we cannot help feeling with what confuſion we ourſelves ſhould be covered had we behaved in ſo abſurd a manner.

Of all the calamities to which the condition of mortality expoſes mankind, the loſs of reaſon appears, to thoſe who have the leaſt ſpark of humanity, by far the moſt dreadful; and they behold that laſt ſtage of human wretchedneſs with deeper commiſeration than any other. But the poor wretch, who is in it, laughs and ſings perhaps, and is altogether inſenſible of his own miſery. The anguiſh which humanity feels, therefore, at the ſight of ſuch an object, cannot be the reflection of any ſentiment of the ſufferer. The compaſſion of the ſpectator muſt ariſe altogether from the conſideration of what he himſelf would feel if he was reduced to the ſame unhappy ſituation, and, what perhaps is impoſſible, was at the ſame time able to regard it with his preſent reaſon and judgment.

What are the pangs of a mother when ſhe hears the moanings of her infant that during the agony of diſeaſe cannot expreſs what it feels? In her idea of what it ſuffers, ſhe joins, to its real helpleſſneſs, her own conſciouſneſs of that helpleſſneſs, and her own terrors for the unknown conſequences of its diſorder; and, out of all theſe, forms, for her own ſorrow, the moſt complete image of miſery and diſtreſs. The infant, however, feels only the uneaſineſs of the preſent inſtant, which can never

never be great. With regard to the future, it is perfectly ſecure, and in its thoughtleſſneſs and want of foreſight, poſſeſſes an antidote againſt fear and anxiety, the great tormentors of the human breaſt, from which reaſon and philoſophy will, in vain, attempt to defend it, when it grows up to a man.

We ſympathize even with the dead, and overlooking what is of real importance in their ſituation, that awful futurity which awaits them, we are chiefly affected by thoſe circumſtances which ſtrike our ſenſes; but can have no influence upon their happineſs. It is miſerable, we think, to be deprived of the light of the ſun; to be ſhut out from life and converſation; to be laid in the cold grave, a prey to corruption and the reptiles of the earth; to be no more thought of in this world, but to be obliterated, in a little time, from the affections, and almoſt from the memory, of their deareſt friends and relations. Surely, we imagine, we can never feel too much for thoſe who have ſuffered ſo dreadful a calamity. The tribute of our fellow-feeling ſeems doubly due to them now, when they are in danger of being forgot by every body; and, by the vain honours which we pay to their memory, we endeavour, for our own miſery, artificially to keep alive our melancholy

lancholy remembrance of their misfortune. That our ſympathy can afford them no conſolation ſeems to be an addition to their calamity; and to think that all we can do is unavailing, and that, what alleviates all other diſtreſs, the regret, the love, and the lamentations of their friends, can yield no comfort to them, ſerves only to exaſperate our ſenſe of their miſery. The happineſs of the dead, however, moſt aſſuredly, is affected by none of theſe circumſtances; nor is it the thought of theſe things which can ever diſturb the profound ſecurity of their repoſe. The idea of that dreary and endleſs melancholy which the fancy naturally aſcribes to their condition, ariſes altogether from our joining to the change which has been produced upon them, our own conſciouſneſs of that change, from our putting ourſelves in their ſituation, and from our lodging, if I may be allowed to ſay ſo, our own living ſouls in their inanimated bodies, and thence conceiving what would be our emotions in this caſe. It is from this very illuſion of the imagination, that the foreſight of our own diſſolution is ſo terrible to us, and that the idea of thoſe circumſtances, which undoubtedly can give us no pain when we are dead, makes us miſerable while we are alive. And from thence ariſes

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one of the moſt important principles in human nature, the dread of death, the great poiſon to the happineſs, but the great reſtraint upon the injuſtice of mankind, which, while it affects and mortifies the individual, guards and protects the ſociety.

CHAP. II.

Of the Pleaſure of mutual Sympathy.

BUT whatever may be the cauſe of ſympathy, or however it may be excited, nothing pleaſes us more than to obſerve in other men a fellow-feeling with all the emotions of our own breaſt; nor are we ever ſo much ſhocked as by the appearance of the contrary. Thoſe who are fond of deducing all our ſentiments from certain refinements of ſelf-love, think themſelves at no loſs to account, according to their own principles, both for this pleaſure and this pain. Man, ſay they, conſcious of his own weakneſs, and of the need which he has for the aſſiſtance of others, rejoices whenever he obſerves that they adopt his own paſſions, becauſe he is then aſſured of that aſſiſtance; and grieves whenever he obſerves

obſerves the contrary, becauſe he is then aſſured of their oppoſition. But both the pleaſure and the pain are always felt ſo inſtantaneouſly, and often upon ſuch frivolous occaſions, that it ſeems evident that neither of them can be derived from any ſuch ſelf-intereſted conſideration. A man is mortified when after having endeavoured to divert the company, he looks round and ſees that nobody laughs at his jeſts but himſelf. On the contrary the mirth of the company is highly agreeable to him, and he regards this correſpondence of their ſentiments with his own as the greateſt applauſe.

Neither does his pleaſure ſeem to ariſe altogether from the additional vivacity which his mirth may receive from ſympathy with theirs, nor his pain from the diſappointment he meets with when he miſſes this pleaſure; though both the one and the other, no doubt, do in ſome meaſure. When we have read a book or poem ſo often that we can no longer find any amuſement in reading it by ourſelves, we can ſtill take pleaſure in reading it to a companion. To him it has all the graces of novelty; we enter into the ſurpriſe and admiration which it naturally excites in him, but which it is no longer capable of exciting in

in us; we conſider all the ideas which it preſents, rather in the light in which they appear to him, than in that in which they appear to ourſelves, and we are amuſed by ſympathy with his amuſement, which thus enlivens our own. On the contrary, we ſhould be vexed if he did not ſeem to be entertained with it, and we could no longer take any pleaſure in reading it to him. It is the ſame caſe here. The mirth of the company, no doubt, enlivens our own mirth; and their ſilence, no doubt, diſappoints us. But though this may contribute both to the pleaſure which we derive from the one, and to the pain which we feel from the other, it is by no means the ſole cauſe of either; and this correſpondence of the ſentiments of others with our own appears to be a cauſe of pleaſure, and the want of it a cauſe of pain, which cannot be accounted for in this manner. The ſympathy, which my friends expreſs with my joy, might indeed give me pleaſure by enlivening that joy: but that which they expreſs with my grief could give me none, if it ſerved only to enliven that grief. Sympathy, however, enlivens joy and alleviates grief. It enlivens joy by preſenting another ſource of ſatisfaction; and

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it alleviates grief by insinuating into the heart almost the only agreeable sensation which it is at that time capable of receiving.

It is to be observed, accordingly, that we are still more anxious to communicate to our friends our disagreeable, than our agreeable passions, that we derive still more satisfaction from their sympathy with the former than from that with the latter, and that we are still more shocked by the want of it.

How are the unfortunate relieved when they have found out a person to whom they can communicate the cause of their sorrow? Upon his sympathy they seem to disburthen themselves of a part of their distress: he is not improperly said to share it with them. He not only feels a sorrow of the same kind with that which they feel, but as if he had derived a part of it to himself, what he feels seems to alleviate the weight of what they feel. Yet by relating their misfortunes they in some measure renew their grief. They awaken in their memory the remembrance of those circumstances which occasion their affliction. Their tears accordingly flow faster than before, and they are apt to abandon themselves to all the weakness of sorrow. They take pleasure, however, in all this, and, it is evident, are sensibly relieved by it; because

cauſe the ſweetneſs of his ſympathy more than compenſates the bitterneſs of that ſorrow, which, in order to excite this ſympathy, they had thus enlivened and renewed. The crueleſt inſult, on the contrary, which can be offered to the unfortunate, is to appear to make light of their calamities. To ſeem not to be affected with the joy of our companions, is but want of politeneſs; but not to wear a ſerious countenance when they tell us their afflictions, is real and groſs inhumanity.

Love is an agreeable; reſentment, a diſagreeable paſſion; and accordingly we are not half ſo anxious that our friends ſhould adopt our friendſhips, as that they ſhould enter into our reſentments. We can forgive them though they ſeem to be little affected with the favours which we may have received, but loſe all patience if they ſeem indifferent about the injuries which may have been done to us: nor are we half ſo angry with them for not entering into our gratitude, as for not ſympathizing with our reſentment. They can eaſily avoid being friends to our friends, but can hardly avoid being enemies to thoſe with whom we are at variance. We ſeldom reſent their being at enmity with the firſt, though upon that account we may ſometimes

times affect to make an awkward quarrel with them; but we quarrel with them in good earneſt if they live in friendſhip with the laſt. The agreeable paſſions of love and joy can ſatisfy and ſupport the heart without any auxiliary pleaſure. The bitter and painful emotions of grief and reſentment more ſtrongly require the healing conſolation of ſympathy.

As the perſon who is principally intereſted in any event is pleaſed with our ſympathy, and hurt by the want of it, ſo we, too, ſeem to be pleaſed when we are able to ſympathize with him, and to be hurt when we are unable to do ſo. We run not only to congratulate the ſucceſsful, but to condole with the afflicted; and the pleaſure which we find in the converſation of one whom in all the paſſions of his heart we can entirely ſympathize with, ſeems to do more than compenſate the painfulneſs of that ſorrow with which the view of his ſituation affects us. On the contrary, it is always diſagreeable to feel that we cannot ſympathize with him, and inſtead of being pleaſed with this exemption from ſympathetic pain, it hurts us to find that we cannot ſhare his uneaſineſs. If we hear a perſon loudly lamenting his misfortunes, which however, upon bringing

the caſe home to ourſelves, we feel, can produce no ſuch violent effect upon us, we are ſhocked at his grief; and, becauſe we cannot enter into it, call it puſillanimity and weakneſs. It gives us the ſpleen, on the other hand, to ſee another too happy, or too much elevated, as we call it, with any little piece of good fortune. We are diſobliged even with his joy; and, becauſe we cannot go along with it, call it levity and folly. We are even put out of humour if our companion laughs louder or longer at a joke than we think it deſerves; that is, than we feel that we ourſelves could laugh at it.

CHAP. III.

Of the manner in which we judge of the propriety or impropriety of the affections of other men by their concord or diſſonance with our own.

WHEN the original paſſions of the perſon principally concerned are in perfect concord with the ſympathetic emotions of the ſpectator, they neceſſarily appear to this laſt

this is equally the caſe with regard to our approbation or diſapprobation of the ſentiments or paſſions of others.

There are, indeed, ſome caſes in which we ſeem to approve without any ſympathy or correſpondence of ſentiments, and in which, conſequently, the ſentiment of approbation would ſeem to be different from the perception of this coincidence. A little attention, however, will convince us that even in theſe caſes our approbation is ultimately founded upon a ſympathy or correſpondence of this kind. I ſhall give an inſtance in things of a very frivolous nature, becauſe in them the judgments of mankind are leſs apt to be perverted by wrong ſyſtems. We may often approve of a jeſt, and think the laughter of the company quite juſt and proper, though we ourſelves do not laugh, becauſe, perhaps, we are in a grave humour, or happen to have our attention engaged with other objects. We have learned, however, from experience, what ſort of pleaſantry is upon moſt occaſions capable of making us laugh, and we obſerve that this is one of that kind. We approve, therefore, of the laughter of the company, and feel that it is natural and ſuitable to its object; becauſe, though in our preſent mood we cannot eaſily enter into it, we are ſenſible

that upon moſt occaſions we ſhould very heartily join in it.

The ſame thing often happens with regard to all the other paſſions. A ſtranger paſſes by us in the ſtreet with all the marks of the deepeſt affliction; and we are immediately told that he has juſt received the news of the death of his father. It is impoſſible that, in this caſe, we ſhould not approve of his grief. Yet it may often happen, without any defect of humanity on our part, that, ſo far from entering into the violence of his ſorrow, we ſhould ſcarce conceive the firſt movements of concern upon his account. Both he and his father, perhaps, are entirely unknown to us, or we happen to be employed about other things, and do not take time to picture out in our imagination the different circumſtances of diſtreſs which muſt occur to him. We have learned, however, from experience, that ſuch a misfortune naturally excites ſuch a degree of ſorrow, and we know that if we took time to conſider his ſituation fully and in all its parts, we ſhould without doubt moſt ſincerely ſympathize with him. It is upon the conſciouſneſs of this conditional ſympathy, that our approbation of his ſorrow is founded, even in thoſe caſes in which that ſympathy does not actually take place; and

laſt juſt and proper, and ſuitable to their objects; and, on the contrary, when, upon bringing the caſe home to himſelf, he finds that they do not coincide with what he feels, they neceſſarily appear to him unjuſt and improper, and unſuitable to the cauſes which excite them. To approve of the paſſions of another, therefore, as ſuitable to their objects, is the ſame thing as to obſerve that we entirely ſympathize with them; and not to approve of them as ſuch, is the ſame thing as to obſerve that we do not entirely ſympathize with them. The man who reſents the injuries that have been done to me, and obſerves that I reſent them preciſely as he does, neceſſarily approves of my reſentment. The man whoſe ſympathy keeps time to my grief, cannot but admit the reaſonableneſs of my ſorrow. He who admires the ſame poem, or the ſame picture, and admires them exactly as I do, muſt ſurely allow the juſtneſs of my admiration. He who laughs at the ſame joke, and laughs along with me, cannot well deny the propriety of my laughter. On the contrary, the perſon who, upon theſe different occaſions, either feels no ſuch emotion as that which I feel, or feels none that bears any proportion to mine, cannot avoid diſapproving my ſentiments on account of their

diſſonance with his own. If my animoſity goes beyond what the indignation of my friend can correſpond to; if my grief exceeds what his moſt tender compaſſion can go along with; if my admiration is either too high or too low to tally with his own; if I laugh loud and heartily when he only ſmiles, or, on the contrary, only ſmile when he laughs loud and heartily; in all theſe caſes, as ſoon as he comes from conſidering the object, to obſerve how I am affected by it, according as there is more or leſs diſproportion between his ſentiments and mine, I muſt incur a greater or leſs degree of his diſapprobation: and upon all occaſions his own ſentiments are the ſtandards and meaſures by which he judges of mine.

To approve of another man's opinions is to adopt thoſe opinions, and to adopt them is to approve of them. If the ſame arguments which convince you, convince me likewiſe, I neceſſarily approve of your conviction; and if they do not, I neceſſarily diſapprove of it: neither can I poſſibly conceive that I ſhould do the one without the other. To approve or diſapprove, therefore, of the opinions of others is acknowledged, by every body, to mean no more than to obſerve their agreement or diſagreement with our own. But

ſpectator and the perſon principally concerned, the ſpectator muſt, firſt of all, endeavour, as much as he can, to put himſelf in the ſituation of the other, and to bring home to himſelf every little circumſtance of diſtreſs which can poſſibly occur to the ſufferer. He muſt adopt the whole caſe of his companion with all its minuteſt incidents; and ſtrive to render as perfect as poſſible that imaginary change of ſituation upon which their ſympathy is founded.

After all this, however, the emotions of the ſpectator will ſtill be very apt to fall ſhort of the violence of what is felt by the ſufferer. Mankind, though naturally ſympathetic, never conceive, for what has befallen another, that degree of paſſion which naturally animates the perſon principally concerned. That imaginary change of ſituation, upon which their ſympathy is founded, is but momentary. The thought of their own ſafety, the thought that they themſelves are not really the ſufferers, continually intrudes itſelf upon them; and though it does not hinder them from conceiving a paſſion ſomewhat analogous to what is felt by the ſufferer, hinders them from conceiving any thing that approaches to the ſame degree of violence.

The

The perſon principally concerned is ſenſible of this, and at the ſame time paſſionately deſires a more complete ſympathy. He longs for that relief which nothing can afford him but the entire concord of the affections of the ſpectators with his own. To ſee the emotions of their hearts, in every reſpect, beat time to his own, in the violent and diſagreeable paſſions, conſtitutes his ſole conſolation. But he can only hope to obtain this by lowering his paſſion to that pitch in which the ſpectators are capable of going along with him. He muſt flatten, if I may be allowed to ſay ſo, the ſharpneſs of its natural tone, in order to reduce it to harmony and concord with the emotions of thoſe who are about him. What they feel, will indeed always be, in ſome reſpects, different from what he feels, and compaſſion can never be exactly the ſame with original ſorrow; becauſe the ſecret conſciouſneſs that the change of ſituations, from which the ſympathetic ſentiment ariſes, is but imaginary, not only lowers it in degree, but, in ſome meaſure, varies it in kind, and gives it a quite different modification. Theſe two ſentiments, however, may, it is evident, have ſuch a correſpondence with one another, as is ſufficient for the harmony of ſociety.

Though

and the general rules derived from our preceding experience of what our ſentiments would commonly correſpond with, correct upon this, as upon many other occaſions, the impropriety of our preſent emotions.

The ſentiment or affection of the heart from which any action proceeds, and upon which its whole virtue or vice muſt ultimately depend, may be conſidered under two different aſpects, or in two different relations; firſt, in relation to the cauſe which excites it, or the motive which gives occaſion to it; and ſecondly, in relation to the end which it propoſes, or the effect which it tends to produce.

In the ſuitableneſs or unſuitableneſs, in the proportion or diſproportion which the affection ſeems to bear to the cauſe or object which excites it, conſiſts the propriety or impropriety, the decency or ungracefulneſs of the conſequent action.

In the beneficial or hurtful nature of the effects which the affection aims at, or tends to produce, conſiſts the merit or demerit of the action, the qualities by which it is entitled to reward, or is deſerving of puniſhment.

Philoſophers have, of late years, conſidered chiefly the tendency of affections, and have

given little attention to the relation which they ſtand in to the cauſe which excites them. In common life, however, when we judge of any perſon's conduct, and of the ſentiments which directed it, we conſtantly conſider them under both theſe aſpects. When we blame in another man the exceſſes of love, of grief, of reſentment, we not only conſider the ruinous effects which they tend to produce, but the little occaſion which was given for them. The merit of his favourite, we ſay, is not ſo great, his misfortune is not ſo dreadful, his provocation is not ſo extraordinary as to juſtify ſo violent a paſſion. We ſhould have indulged, we ſay; perhaps, have approved of the violence of his emotion, had the cauſe been in any reſpect proportioned to it.

When we judge in this manner of any affection as proportioned or diſproportioned to the cauſe which excites it, it is ſcarce poſſible that we ſhould make uſe of any other rule or canon but the correſpondent affection in ourſelves. If upon bringing the caſe home to our own breaſt, we find that the ſentiments which it gives occaſion to, coincide and tally with our own, we neceſſarily approve of them, as proportioned and ſuitable to their objects; if otherwiſe, we neceſſarily

ceſſarily diſapprove of them, as extravagant and out of proportion.

Every faculty in one man is the meaſure by which he judges of the like faculty in another. I judge of your ſight by my ſight, of your ear by my ear, of your reaſon by my reaſon, of your reſentment by my reſentment, of your love by my love. I neither have, nor can have, any other way of judging about them.

CHAP. IV.

The ſame Subject continued.

WE may judge of the propriety or impropriety of the ſentiments of another perſon by their correſpondence or diſagreement with our own, upon two different occaſions; either, firſt, when the objects which excite them are conſidered without any peculiar relation either to ourſelves, or to the perſon whoſe ſentiments we judge of; or, ſecondly, when they are conſidered as peculiarly affecting one or other of us.

1. With

1. With regard to thoſe objects which are conſidered without any peculiar relation either to ourſelves or to the perſon whoſe ſentiments we judge of; wherever his ſentiments entirely correſpond with our own, we aſcribe to him the qualities of taſte and good judgment. The beauty of a plain, the greatneſs of a mountain, the ornaments of a building, the expreſſion of a picture, the compoſition of a diſcourſe, the conduct of a third perſon, the proportions of different quantities and numbers, the various appearances which the great machine of the univerſe is perpetually exhibiting, with the ſecret wheels and ſprings which produce them; all the general ſubjects of ſcience and taſte, are what we and our companions regard as having no peculiar relation to either of us. We both look at them from the ſame point of view, and we have no occaſion for ſympathy, or for that imaginary change of ſituations from which it ariſes, in order to produce, with regard to theſe, the moſt perfect harmony of ſentiments and affections. If, notwithſtanding, we are often differently affected, it ariſes, either from the different degrees of attention which our different habits of life allow us to give eaſily to the ſeveral parts of thoſe complex objects,

or

or from the different degrees of natural acuteneſs in the faculty of the mind to which they are addreſſed.

When the ſentiments of our companion coincide with our own in things of this kind, which are obvious and eaſy, and in which, perhaps, we never found a ſingle perſon who differed from us, though we, no doubt, muſt approve of them, yet he ſeems to deſerve no praiſe or admiration on account of them. But when they not only coincide with our own, but lead and direct our own; when in forming them he appears to have attended to many things which we had overlooked, and to have adjuſted them to all the various circumſtances of their objects; we not only approve of them, but wonder and are ſurpriſed at their uncommon and unexpected acuteneſs and comprehenſiveneſs, and he appears to deſerve a very high degree of admiration and applauſe. For approbation, heightened by wonder and ſurpriſe, conſtitutes the ſentiment which is properly called admiration, and of which applauſe is the natural expreſſion. The deciſion of the man who judges that exquiſite beauty is preferable to the groſſeſt deformity, or that twice two are equal to four, muſt certainly be approved of by all the world, but will not, ſurely, be much admired.

It

It is the acute and delicate diſcernment of the man of taſte, who diſtinguiſhes the minute, and ſcarce perceptible differences of beauty and deformity; it is the comprehenſive accuracy of the experienced mathematician, who unravels, with eaſe, the moſt intricate and perplexed proportions; it is the great leader in ſcience and taſte, the man who directs and conducts our own ſentiments, the extent and ſuperior juſtneſs of whoſe talents aſtoniſh us with wonder and ſurpriſe, who excites our admiration, and ſeems to deſerve our applauſe; and upon this foundation is grounded the greater part of the praiſe which is beſtowed upon what are called the intellectual virtues.

The utility of thoſe qualities, it may be thought, is what firſt recommends them to us; and no doubt, the conſideration of this, when we come to attend to it, gives them a new value. Originally, however, we approve of another man's judgment, not as ſomething uſeful, but as right, as accurate, as agreeable to truth and reality: and it is evident we attribute thoſe qualities to it for no other reaſon but becauſe we find that it agrees with our own. Taſte, in the ſame manner, is originally approved of, not as uſeful, but as juſt, as delicate, and as preciſely ſuited

ſuited to its object. The idea of the utility of all qualities of this kind, is plainly an after-thought, and not what firſt recommends them to our approbation.

2. With regard to thoſe objects, which affect in a particular manner either ourſelves or the perſon whoſe ſentiments we judge of, it is at once more difficult to preſerve this harmony and correſpondence, and, at the ſame time, vaſtly more important. My companion does not naturally look upon the misfortune that has befallen me, or the injury that has been done me, from the ſame point of view in which I conſider them. They affect me much more nearly. We do not view them from the ſame ſtation, as we do a picture, or a poem, or a ſyſtem of philoſophy, and are, therefore, apt to be very differently affected by them. But I can much more eaſily overlook the want of this correſpondence of ſentiments with regard to ſuch indifferent objects as concern neither me nor my companion, than with regard to what intereſts me ſo much as the misfortune that has befallen me, or the injury that has been done me. Though you deſpiſe that picture, or that poem, or even that ſyſtem of philoſophy, which I admire, there is little danger of our quarrelling upon that account. Neither

of

of us can reaſonably be much intereſted about them. They ought all of them to be matters of great indifference to us both; ſo that, though our opinions may be oppoſite, our affections may ſtill be very nearly the ſame. But it is quite otherwiſe with regard to thoſe objects by which either you or I are particularly affected. Though your judgments in matters of ſpeculation, though your ſentiments in matters of taſte, are quite oppoſite to mine, I can eaſily overlook this oppoſition; and if I have any degree of temper, I may ſtill find ſome entertainment in your converſation, even upon thoſe very ſubjects. But if you have either no fellow-feeling for the misfortunes I have met with, or none that bears any proportion to the grief which diſtracts me; or if you have either no indignation at the injuries I have ſuffered, or none that bears any proportion to the reſentment which tranſports me, we can no longer converſe upon theſe ſubjects. We become intolerable to one another. I can neither ſupport your company, nor you mine. You are confounded at my violence and paſſion, and I am enraged at your cold inſenſibility and want of feeling.

In all ſuch caſes, that there may be ſome correſpondence of ſentiments between the ſpectator

than that of a friend; and that of an assembly of strangers, still more than that of an acquaintance.

Society and conversation, therefore, are the most powerful remedies for restoring the mind to its tranquillity, if, at any time, it has unfortunately lost it; as well as the best preservatives of that equal and happy temper, which is so necessary to self-satisfaction and enjoyment. Men of retirement and speculation, who are apt to sit brooding at home over either grief or resentment, though they may often have more humanity, more generosity, and a nicer sense of honour, yet seldom possess that equality of temper which is so common among men of the world.

CHAP. V.

Of the amiable and respectable virtues.

UPON these two different efforts, upon that of the spectator to enter into the sentiments of the person principally concerned, and upon that of the person principally concerned, to bring down his emotions to what the spectator can go along with, are founded

two different ſets of virtues. The ſoft, the gentle, the amiable virtues, the virtues of candid condeſcenſion and indulgent humanity, are founded upon the one: the great, the awful and reſpectable, the virtues of ſelf-denial, of ſelf-government, of that command of the paſſions which ſubjects all the movements of our nature to what our own dignity and honour, and the propriety of our own conduct require, take their origin from the other.

How amiable does he appear to be whoſe ſympathetic heart ſeems to re-echo all the ſentiments of thoſe with whom he converſes, who grieves for their calamities who reſents their injuries, and who rejoices at their good fortune! When we bring home to ourſelves the ſituation of his companions we enter into their gratitude, and feel what conſolation they muſt derive from the tender ſympathy of ſo affectionate a friend. And for a contrary reaſon, how diſagreeable does he appear to be, whoſe hard and obdurate heart feels for himſelf only, but is altogether inſenſible to the happineſs or miſery of others! We enter, in this caſe too, into the pain which his preſence muſt give to every mortal with whom he converſes, to thoſe eſpecially with whom we are moſt apt to ſympathize, the unfortunate and the injured.

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On the other hand, what noble propriety and grace do we feel in the conduct of thoſe who, in their own caſe, exert that recollection and ſelf-command which conſtitute the dignity of every paſſion, and which bring it down to what others can enter into? We are diſguſted with that clamorous grief, which without any delicacy calls upon our compaſſion with ſighs and tears and importunate lamentations. But we reverence that reſerved, that ſilent and majeſtic ſorrow, which diſcovers itſelf only in the ſwelling of the eyes, in the quivering of the lips and cheeks, and in the diſtant, but affecting coldneſs of the whole behaviour. It impoſes the like ſilence upon us. We regard it with reſpectful attention, and watch with anxious concern over our whole behaviour, leſt by any impropriety we ſhould diſturb that concerted tranquillity, which it requires ſo great an effort to ſupport.

The inſolence and brutality of anger, in the ſame manner when we indulge its fury without check or reſtraint is of all objects, the moſt deteſtable. But we admire that noble and generous reſentment which governs its purſuit of the greateſt injuries, not by the rage which they are apt to excite in the breaſt of the ſufferer, but by the indignation which

they naturally call forth in that of the impartial ſpectator; which allows no word, no geſture, to eſcape it beyond what this more equitable ſentiment would dictate; which never, even in thought, attempts any greater vengeance, nor deſires to inflict any greater puniſhment, than what every indifferent perſon would rejoice to ſee executed.

And hence it is, that to feel much for others and little for ourſelves, that to reſtrain our ſelfiſh, and to indulge our benevolent affections, conſtitutes the perfection of human nature; and can alone produce among mankind that harmony of ſentiments and paſſions in which conſiſts their whole grace and propriety. As to love our neighbour as we love ourſelves is the great law of Chriſtianity, ſo it is the great precept of nature to love ourſelves only as we love our neighbour, or what comes to the ſame thing, as our neighbour is capable of loving us.

As taſte and good judgment, when they are conſidered as qualities which deſerve praiſe and admiration are ſuppoſed to imply a delicacy of ſentiment and an acuteneſs of underſtanding not commonly to be met with; ſo the virtues of ſenſibility and ſelf-command are not apprehended to conſiſt in the ordinary, but in the uncommon degrees

of

of thoſe qualities. The amiable virtue of humanity requires, ſurely, a ſenſibility much beyond what is poſſeſſed by the rude vulgar of mankind. The great and exalted virtue of magnanimity undoubtedly demands much more than that degree of ſelf-command, which the weakeſt of mortals is capable of exerting. As in the common degree of the intellectual qualities, there are no abilities; ſo in the common degree of the moral, there is no virtue. Virtue is excellence, ſomething uncommonly great and beautiful, which riſes far above what is vulgar and ordinary. The amiable virtues conſiſt in that degree of ſenſibility which ſurpriſes by its exquiſite and unexpected delicacy and tenderneſs: the awful and reſpectable, in that degree of ſelf-command which aſtoniſhes by its amazing ſuperiority over the moſt ungovernable paſſions of human nature.

There is, in this reſpect, a conſiderable difference between virtue and mere propriety; between thoſe qualities and actions which deſerve to be admired and celebrated, and thoſe which ſimply deſerve to be approved of. Upon many occaſions, to act with the moſt perfect propriety, requires no more than that common and ordinary degree of ſenſibility or ſelf-command which the moſt worthleſs of

mankind are poſſeſt of, and ſometimes even that degree is not neceſſary. Thus, to give a very low inſtance, to eat when we are hungry, is certainly, upon ordinary occaſions, perfectly right and proper, and cannot miſs being approved of as ſuch by every body. Nothing, however, could be more abſurd than to ſay it was virtuous.

On the contrary, there may frequently be a conſiderable degree of virtue in thoſe actions which fall ſhort of the moſt perfect propriety; becauſe they may ſtill approach nearer to perfection than could well be expected upon occaſions on which it was ſo extremely difficult to attain it: and this is very often the caſe upon thoſe occaſions which require the greateſt exertions of ſelf-command. There are ſome ſituations which bear ſo hard upon human nature, that the greateſt degree of ſelf-government, which can belong to ſo imperfect a creature as man, is not able to ſtifle, altogether, the voice of human weakneſs, or reduce the violence of the paſſions to that pitch of moderation, in which the impartial ſpectator can entirely enter into them. Though in thoſe caſes, therefore, the behaviour of the ſufferer fall ſhort of the moſt perfect propriety, it may ſtill deſerve ſome applauſe, and, even in a certain ſenſe, may

may be denominated virtuous. It may ſtill manifeſt an effort of generoſity and magnanimity of which the greater part of men are incapable; and though it fails of abſolute perfection, it may be a much nearer approximation towards perfection, than what, upon ſuch trying occaſions, is commonly either to be found or to be expected.

In caſes of this kind, when we are determining the degree of blame or applauſe which ſeems due to any action, we very frequently make uſe of two different ſtandards. The firſt is the idea of complete propriety and perfection, which, in thoſe difficult ſituations, no human conduct ever did, or ever can come up to; and in compariſon with which the actions of all men muſt for ever appear blameable and imperfect. The ſecond is the idea of that degree of proximity or diſtance from this complete perfection, which the actions of the greater part of men commonly arrive at. Whatever goes beyond this degree, how far ſoever it may be removed from abſolute perfection, ſeems to deſerve applauſe; and whatever falls ſhort of it, to deſerve blame.

It is in the ſame manner that we judge of the productions of all the arts which addreſs themſelves to the imagination. When a critic

critic examines the work of any of the great maſters in poetry or painting, he may ſometimes examine it by an idea of perfection, in his own mind, which neither that nor any other human work will ever come up to; and as long as he compares it with this ſtandard, he can ſee nothing in it but faults and imperfections. But when he comes to conſider the rank which it ought to hold among other works of the ſame kind, he neceſſarily compares it with a very different ſtandard, the common degree of excellence which is uſually attained in this particular art; and when he judges of it by this new meaſure, it may often appear to deſerve the higheſt applauſe, upon account of its approaching much nearer to perfection than the greater part of thoſe works which can be brought into competition with it.

Though they will never be uniſons they may be concords, and this is all that is wanted or required.

In order to produce this concord, as nature teaches the ſpectators to aſſume the circumſtances of the perſon principally concerned, ſo ſhe teaches this laſt in ſome meaſure to aſſume thoſe of the ſpectators. As they are continually placing themſelves in his ſituation, and thence conceiving emotions ſimilar to what he feels; ſo he is as conſtantly placing himſelf in theirs, and thence conceiving ſome degree of that coolneſs about his own fortune, with which he is ſenſible that they will view it. As they are conſtantly conſidering what they themſelves would feel, if they actually were the ſufferer, ſo he is as conſtantly led to imagine in what manner he would be affected if he was only one of the ſpectators of his own ſituation. As their ſympathy makes them look at it, in ſome meaſure, with his eyes, ſo his ſympathy makes him look at it in ſome meaſure, with theirs, eſpecially when in their preſence and acting under their obſervation: and as the reflected paſſion, which he thus conceives, is much weaker than the original one, it neceſſarily abates the violence of what he felt before he came into their preſence, before he

began to recollect in what manner they would be affected by it, and to view his ſituation in this candid and impartial light.

The mind, therefore, is rarely ſo diſturbed but that the company of a friend will reſtore it to ſome degree of tranquillity and ſedateneſs. The breaſt is in ſome meaſure, calmed and compoſed the moment we come into his preſence. We are immediately put in mind of the light in which he will view our ſituation, and we begin to view it ourſelves in the ſame light; for the effect of ſympathy is inſtantaneous. We expect leſs ſympathy from a common acquaintance than from a friend: we cannot open to the former all thoſe little circumſtances which we can unfold to the latter: we aſſume therefore more tranquillity before him, and endeavour to fix our thoughts upon thoſe general outlines of our ſituation which he is willing to conſider. We expect ſtill leſs ſympathy from an aſſembly of ſtrangers, and we aſſume, therefore, ſtill more tranquillity before them, and always endeavour to bring down our paſſion to that pitch, which the particular company we are in may be expected to go along with. Nor is this only an aſſumed appearance; for if we are at all maſters of ourſelves, the preſence of a mere acquaintance will really compoſe us ſtill more

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SECTION II.

Of the Degrees of the different Paſſions which are conſiſtent with Propriety.

INTRODUCTION.

THE propriety of every paſſion excited by objects peculiarly related to ourſelves, the pitch which the ſpectator can go along with, muſt lie, it is evident, in a certain mediocrity. If the paſſion is too high, or if it is too low, he cannot enter into it. Grief and reſentment for private misfortunes and injuries may eaſily, for example, be too high, and in the greater part of mankind, they are ſo. They may likewiſe, though this more rarely happens, be too low. We denominate the exceſs, weakneſs and fury: and we call the defect, ſtupidity, inſenſibility, and want of ſpirit. We can enter into neither of them, but are aſtoniſhed and confounded to ſee them.

This mediocrity, however, in which the point of propriety conſiſts, is different in different paſſions. It is high in ſome, and low

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in others. There are ſome paſſions which it is indecent to expreſs very ſtrongly, even upon thoſe occaſions, in which it is acknowledged that we cannot avoid feeling them in the higheſt degree. And there are others of which the ſtrongeſt expreſſions are upon many occaſions extremely graceful, even though the paſſions themſelves do not, perhaps, ariſe ſo neceſſarily. The firſt are thoſe paſſions with which, for certain reaſons, there is little or no ſympathy: the ſecond are thoſe with which, for other reaſons, there is the greateſt. And if we conſider all the different paſſions of human nature, we ſhall find that they are regarded as decent or indecent, juſt in proportion as mankind are more or leſs diſpoſed to ſympathize with them.

CHAP. I.

Of the Paſſions which take their origin from the body.

1. IT is indecent to expreſs any ſtrong degree of thoſe paſſions which ariſe from a certain ſituation or diſpoſition of the body; becauſe the company, not being in the ſame diſpo-

diſpoſition, cannot be expected to ſympathize with them. Violent hunger, for example, though upon many occaſions not only natural, but unavoidable, is always indecent, and to eat voraciouſly is univerſally regarded as a piece of ill manners. There is, however, ſome degree of ſympathy, even with hunger. It is agreeable to ſee our companions eat with a good appetite, and all expreſſions of loathing are offenſive. The diſpoſition of body which is habitual to a man in health, makes his ſtomach eaſily keep time, if I may be allowed ſo coarſe an expreſſion, with the one, and not with the other. We can ſympathize with the diſtreſs which exceſſive hunger occaſions when we read the deſcription of it in the journal of a ſiege, or of a ſea voyage. We imagine ourſelves in the ſituation of the ſufferers, and thence readily conceive the grief, the fear, and conſternation which muſt neceſſarily diſtract them. We feel, ourſelves, ſome degree of thoſe paſſions, and therefore ſympathize with them: but as we do not grow hungry by reading the deſcription, we cannot properly, even in this caſe, be ſaid to ſympathize with their hunger.

It is the ſame caſe with the paſſion by which nature unites the two ſexes. Though naturally the moſt furious of all the paſſions, all

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ſtrong expreſſions of it are upon every occaſion indecent, even between perſons in whom its moſt complete indulgence is acknowledged by all laws, both human and divine, to be perfectly innocent. There ſeems, however, to be ſome degree of ſympathy even with this paſſion. To talk to a woman as we ſhould to a man is improper: it is expected that their company ſhould inſpire us with more gaiety, more pleaſantry, and more attention; and an intire inſenſibility to the fair ſex, renders a man contemptible in ſome meaſure even to the men.

Such is our averſion for all the appetites which take their origin from the body: all ſtrong expreſſions of them are loathſome and diſagreeable. According to ſome ancient philoſophers, theſe are the paſſions which we ſhare in common with the brutes, and which having no connexion with the characteriſtical qualities of human nature, are upon that account beneath its dignity. But there are many other paſſions which we ſhare in common with the brutes, ſuch as reſentment, natural affection, even gratitude, which do not, upon that account, appear to be ſo brutal. The true cauſe of the peculiar diſguſt which we conceive for the appetites of the body when we ſee them in other men, is

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that we cannot enter into them. To the perſon himſelf who feels them, as ſoon as they are gratified, the object that excited them ceaſes to be agreeable: even its preſence often becomes offenſive to him; he looks round to no purpoſe for the charm which tranſported him the moment before, and he can now as little enter into his own paſſion as another perſon. When we have dined, we order the covers to be removed; and we ſhould treat in the ſame manner the objects of the moſt ardent and paſſionate deſires, if they were the objects of no other paſſions but thoſe which take their origin from the body.

In the command of thoſe appetites of the body conſiſts that virtue which is properly called temperance. To reſtrain them within thoſe bounds, which regard to health and fortune preſcribes, is the part of prudence. But to confine them within thoſe limits, which grace, which propriety, which delicacy, and modeſty, require, is the office of temperance.

2. It is for the ſame reaſon that to cry out with bodily pain, how intolerable ſoever, appears always unmanly and unbecoming. There is, however, a good deal of ſympathy with bodily pain. If, as has already been obſerved, I ſee a ſtroke aimed, and juſt ready

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to fall upon the leg or arm of another perſon, I naturally ſhrink and draw back my own leg, or my own arm: and when it does fall, I feel it in ſome meaſure, and am hurt by it as well as the ſufferer. My hurt, however, is, no doubt, exceſſively ſlight, and, upon that account, if he makes any violent out-cry, as I cannot go along with him, I never fail to deſpiſe him. And this is the caſe of all the paſſions which take their origin from the body: they excite either no ſympathy at all, or ſuch a degree of it, as is altogether diſproportioned to the violence of what is felt by the ſufferer.

It is quite otherwiſe with thoſe paſſions which take their origin from the imagination. The frame of my body can be but little affected by the alterations which are brought about upon that of my companion: but my imagination is more ductile, and more readily aſſumes, if I may ſay ſo, the ſhape and configuration of the imaginations of thoſe with whom I am familiar. A diſappointment in love, or ambition, will, upon this account, call forth more ſympathy than the greateſt bodily evil. Thoſe paſſions ariſe altogether from the imagination. The perſon who has loſt his whole fortune, if he is in health, feels nothing in his body. What

he ſuffers is from the imagination only, which repreſents to him the loſs of his dignity, neglect from his friends, contempt from his enemies, dependance, want, and miſery, coming faſt upon him; and we ſympathize with him more ſtrongly upon this account, becauſe our imaginations can more readily mould themſelves upon his imagination, than our bodies can mould themſelves upon his body.

The loſs of a leg may generally be regarded as a more real calamity than the loſs of a miſtreſs. It would be a ridiculous tragedy, however, of which the cataſtrophe was to turn upon a loſs of that kind. A misfortune of the other kind, how frivolous ſoever it may appear to be, has given occaſion to many a fine one.

Nothing is ſo ſoon forgot as pain. The moment it is gone, the whole agony of it is over, and the thought of it can no longer give us any ſort of diſturbance. We ourſelves cannot then enter into the anxiety and anguiſh which we had before conceived. An unguarded word from a friend will occaſion a more durable uneaſineſs. The agony which this creates is by no means over with the word. What at firſt diſturbs us is not the object of the ſenſes, but the idea of the imagination. As it is an idea, therefore,

which occaſions our uneaſineſs, till time and other accidents have in ſome meaſure effaced it from our memory, the imagination continues to fret and rankle within, from the thought of it.

Pain never calls forth any very lively ſympathy unleſs it is accompanied with danger. We ſympathize with the fear, though not with the agony of the ſufferer. Fear, however, is a paſſion derived altogether from the imagination, which repreſents, with an uncertainty and fluctuation that increaſes our anxiety, not what we really feel, but what we may hereafter poſſibly ſuffer. The gout or the tooth-ach, though exquiſitely painful, excite very little ſympathy; more dangerous diſeaſes, though accompanied with very little pain, excite the higheſt.

Some people faint and grow ſick at the ſight of a chirurgical operation, and that bodily pain which is occaſioned by tearing the fleſh, ſeems, in them, to excite the moſt exceſſive ſympathy. We conceive in a much more lively and diſtinct manner the pain which proceeds from an external cauſe, than we do that which ariſes from an internal diſorder. I can ſcarce form an idea of the agonies of my neighbour when he is tortured with the gout or the ſtone; but I have the

cleareſt conception of what he muſt ſuffer from an inciſion, a wound, or a fracture. The chief cauſe, however, why ſuch objects produce ſuch violent effects upon us, is their novelty. One who has been witneſs to a dozen diſſections, and as many amputations, ſees, ever after, all operations of this kind with great indifference, and often with perfect inſenſibility. Though we have read or ſeen repreſented more than five hundred tragedies, we ſhall ſeldom feel ſo entire an abatement of our ſenſibility to the objects which they repreſent to us.

In ſome of the Greek tragedies there is an attempt to excite compaſſion, by the repreſentation of the agonies of bodily pain. Philoctetes cries out and faints from the extremity of his ſufferings. Hippolytus and Hercules are both introduced as expiring under the ſevereſt tortures, which, it ſeems, even the fortitude of Hercules was incapable of ſupporting. In all theſe caſes, however, it is not the pain which intereſts us, but ſome other circumſtance. It is not the ſore foot, but the ſolitude, of Philoctetes which affects us, and diffuſes over that charming tragedy, that romantic wildneſs, which is ſo agreeable to the imagination. The agonies of Hercules and Hippolytus are intereſting only be-

cauſe we foreſee that death is to be the conſequence. If thoſe heroes were to recover, we ſhould think the repreſentation of their ſufferings perfectly ridiculous. What a tragedy would that be, of which the diſtreſs conſiſted in a cholic! Yet no pain is more exquiſite. Theſe attempts to excite compaſſion by the repreſentation of bodily pain, may be regarded as among the greateſt breaches of decorum of which the Greek theatre has ſet the example.

The little ſympathy which we feel with bodily pain is the foundation of the propriety of conſtancy and patience in enduring it. The man, who under the ſevereſt tortures allows no weakneſs to eſcape him, vents no groan, gives way to no paſſion which we do not entirely enter into, commands our higheſt admiration. His firmneſs enables him to keep time with our indifference and inſenſibility. We admire and entirely go along with the magnanimous effort which he makes for this purpoſe. We approve of his behaviour, and from our experience of the common weakneſs of human nature, we are ſurpriſed, and wonder how he ſhould be able to act ſo as to deſerve approbation. Approbation, mixed and animated by wonder and ſurprize, conſtitutes the ſentiment which is

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properly called admiration, of which, applauſe is the natural expreſſion, as has already been obſerved.

CHAP. II.

Of thoſe Paſſions which take their origin from a particular turn or habit of the Imagination.

EVEN of the paſſions derived from the imagination, thoſe which take their origin from a peculiar turn or habit it has acquired, though they may be acknowledged to be perfectly natural, are, however, but little ſympathized with. The imaginations of mankind, not having acquired that particular turn, cannot enter into them; and ſuch paſſions, though they may be allowed to be almoſt unavoidable in ſome part of life, are always, in ſome meaſure, ridiculous. This is the caſe with that ſtrong attachment which naturally grows up between two perſons of different ſexes, who have long fixed their thoughts upon one another. Our imagination not having run in the ſame channel with that of the lover, we cannot enter into the

eagerneſs of his emotions. If our friend has been injured, we readily ſympathize with his reſentment, and grow angry with the very perſon with whom he is angry. If he has received a benefit, we readily enter into his gratitude, and have a very high ſenſe of the merit of his benefactor. But if he is in love, though we may think his paſſion juſt as reaſonable as any of the kind, yet we never think ourſelves bound to conceive a paſſion of the ſame kind, and for the ſame perſon for whom he has conceived it. The paſſion appears to every body, but the man who feels it, entirely diſproportioned to the value of the object; and love, though it is pardoned in a certain age becauſe we know it is natural, is always laughed at, becauſe we cannot enter into it. All ſerious and ſtrong expreſſions of it appear ridiculous to a third perſon; and though a lover may be good company to his miſtreſs, he is ſo to nobody elſe. He himſelf is ſenſible of this; and as long as he continues in his ſober ſenſes, endeavours to treat his own paſſion with raillery and ridicule. It is the only ſtyle in which we care to hear of it; becauſe it is the only ſtyle in which we ourſelves are diſpoſed to talk of it. We grow weary of the grave, pedantic, and long-ſentenced love of Cowley and Petrarca, who never have done with

with exaggerating the violence of their attachments; but the gaiety of Ovid, and the gallantry of Horace, are always agreeable.

But though we feel no proper ſympathy with an attachment of this kind, though we never approach even in imagination towards conceiving a paſſion for that particular perſon, yet as we either have conceived, or may be diſpoſed to conceive, paſſions of the ſame kind, we readily enter into thoſe high hopes of happineſs which are propoſed from its gratification, as well as into that exquiſite diſtreſs which is feared from its diſappointment. It intereſts us not as a paſſion, but as a ſituation that gives occaſion to other paſſions which intereſt us; to hope, to fear, and to diſtreſs of every kind: in the ſame manner as in a deſcription of a ſea voyage, it is not the hunger which intereſts us, but the diſtreſs which that hunger occaſions. Though we do not properly enter into the attachment of the lover, we readily go along with thoſe expectations of romantic happineſs which he derives from it. We feel how natural it is for the mind in a certain ſituation, relaxed with indolence, and fatigued with the violence of deſire, to long for ſerenity and quiet, to hope to find them in the gratification of that paſſion which diſtracts it, and to frame to itſelf

the idea of that life of paſtoral tranquillity and retirement which the elegant, the tender, and the paſſionate Tibullus takes ſo much pleaſure in deſcribing; a life like what the poets deſcribe in the Fortunate Iſlands, a life of friendſhip, liberty, and repoſe; free from labour, and from care, and from all the turbulent paſſions which attend them. Even ſcenes of this kind intereſt us moſt, when they are painted rather as what is hoped, than as what is enjoyed. The groſſneſs of that paſſion which mixes with, and is, perhaps, the foundation of love, diſappears when its gratification is far off and at a diſtance; but renders the whole offenſive, when deſcribed as what is immediately poſſeſſed. The happy paſſion, upon this account, intereſts us much leſs than the fearful and the melancholy. We tremble for whatever can diſappoint ſuch natural and agreeable hopes: and thus enter into all the anxiety, and concern, and diſtreſs of the lover.

Hence it is, that, in ſome modern tragedies and romances, this paſſion appears ſo wonderfully intereſting. It is not ſo much the love of Caſtalio and Monimia which attaches us in the Orphan, as the diſtreſs which that love occaſions. The author who ſhould introduce two lovers, in a ſcene of perfect ſecurity,

curity, expreſſing their mutual fondneſs for one another, would excite laughter and not ſympathy. If a ſcene of this kind is ever admitted into a tragedy, it is always, in ſome meaſure, improper, and is endured, not from any ſympathy with the paſſion that is expreſſed in it, but from concern for the dangers and difficulties with which the audience foreſee that its gratification is likely to be attended.

The reſerve which the laws of ſociety impoſe upon the fair ſex, with regard to this weakneſs, renders it more peculiarly diſtreſſful in them, and, upon that very account, more deeply intereſting. We are charmed with the love of Phædra, as it is expreſſed in the French tragedy of that name, notwithſtanding all the extravagance and guilt which attend it. That very extravagance and guilt may be ſaid, in ſome meaſure, to recommend it to us. Her fear, her ſhame, her remorſe, her horror, her deſpair, become thereby more natural and intereſting. All the ſecondary paſſions, if I may be allowed to call them ſo, which ariſe from the ſituation of love, become neceſſarily more furious and violent; and it is with theſe ſecondary paſſions only that we can properly be ſaid to ſympathize.

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Of all the paſſions, however, which are ſo extravagantly diſproportioned to the value of their objects, love is the only one that appears, even to the weakeſt minds, to have any thing in it that is either graceful or agreeable. In itſelf, firſt of all, though it may be ridiculous, it is not naturally odious; and though its conſequences are often fatal and dreadful, its intentions are ſeldom miſchievous. And then, though there is little propriety in the paſſion itſelf, there is a good deal in ſome of thoſe which always accompany it. There is in love a ſtrong mixture of humanity, generoſity, kindneſs, friendſhip, eſteem; paſſions with which, of all others, for reaſons which ſhall be explained immediately, we have the greateſt propenſity to ſympathize, even notwithſtanding we are ſenſible that they are, in ſome meaſure exceſſive. The ſympathy which we feel with them, renders the paſſion which they accompany, leſs diſagreeable, and ſupports it in our imagination, notwithſtanding all the vices which commonly go along with it; though in the one ſex it neceſſarily leads to the laſt ruin and infamy; and though in the other, where it is apprehended to be leaſt fatal, it is almoſt always attended with an incapacity for labour,

labour, a neglect of duty, a contempt of fame and even of common reputation. Notwithstanding all this, the degree of sensibility and generosity with which it is supposed to be accompanied, renders it to many the object of vanity; and they are fond of appearing capable of feeling what would do them no honour if they had really felt it.

It is for a reason of the same kind that a certain reserve is necessary when we talk of our own friends, our own studies, our own professions. All these are objects which we cannot expect should interest our companions in the same degree in which they interest us. And it is for want of this reserve that the one half of mankind make bad company to the other. A philosopher is company to a philosopher only; the member of a club to his own little knot of companions.

CHAP. III.

Of the unſocial Paſſions.

THERE is another ſet of paſſions, which, though derived from the imagination, yet before we can enter into them, or regard them as graceful or becoming, muſt always be brought down to a pitch much lower than that to which undiſciplined nature would raiſe them. Theſe are, hatred and reſentment, with all their different modifications. With regard to all ſuch paſſions, our ſympathy is divided between the perſon who feels them, and the perſon who is the object of them. The intereſts of theſe two are directly oppoſite. What our ſympathy with the perſon who feels them would prompt us to wiſh for, our fellow-feeling with the other would lead us to fear. As they are both men, we are concerned for both, and our fear for what the one may ſuffer, damps our reſentment for what the other has ſuffered. Our ſympathy, therefore, with the man who has received the provocation, neceſſarily falls

ſhort

ſhort of the paſſion which naturally animates him, not only upon account of thoſe general cauſes which render all ſympathetic paſſions inferior to the original ones, but upon account of that particular cauſe which is peculiar to itſelf, our oppoſite ſympathy with another perſon. Before reſentment, therefore, can become graceful and agreeable, it muſt be more humbled, and brought down below that pitch to which it would naturally riſe, than almoſt any other paſſion.

Mankind, at the ſame time, have a very ſtrong ſenſe of the injuries that are done to another. The villain, in a tragedy or romance, is as much the object of our indignation, as the hero is of our ſympathy and affection. We deteſt Iago as much as we eſteem Othello; and delight as much in the puniſhment of the one, as we are grieved at the diſtreſs of the other. But though mankind have ſo ſtrong a fellow-feeling with the injuries that are done to their brethren, they do not always reſent them the more that the ſufferer appears to reſent them. Upon moſt occaſions, the greater his patience, his mildneſs, his humanity, provided it does not appear that he wants ſpirit, or that fear was the motive of his forbearance, the higher the reſentment againſt the perſon who injured him.

him. The amiableneſs of the character exaſperates their ſenſe of the atrocity of the injury.

Theſe paſſions, however, are regarded as neceſſary parts of the character of human nature. A perſon becomes contemptible who tamely ſits ſtill, and ſubmits to inſults without attempting either to repel or to revenge them. We cannot enter into his indifference and inſenſibility: we call his behaviour meanſpiritedneſs, and are as really provoked by it as by the inſolence of his adverſary. Even the mob are enraged to ſee any man ſubmit patiently to affronts and ill uſage. They deſire to ſee this inſolence reſented, and reſented by the perſon who ſuffers from it. They cry to him with fury to defend, or to revenge himſelf. If his indignation rouſes at laſt, they heartily applaud and ſympathize with it. It enlivens their own indignation againſt his enemy, whom they rejoice to ſee him attack in turn, and are as really gratified by his revenge, provided it is not immoderate, as if the injury had been done to themſelves.

But though the utility of thoſe paſſions to the individual, by rendering it dangerous to inſult or injure him, be acknowledged; and though their utility to the public, as the guardians

guardians of juſtice, and of the equality of its adminiſtration, be not leſs conſiderable, as ſhall be ſhewn hereafter; yet there is ſtill ſomething diſagreeable in the paſſions themſelves, which makes the appearance of them in other men the natural object of our averſion. The expreſſion of anger towards any body preſent, if it exceeds a bare intimation that we are ſenſible of his ill uſage, is regarded not only as an inſult to that particular perſon, but as a rudeneſs to the whole company. Reſpect for them ought to have reſtrained us from giving way to ſo boiſterous and offenſive an emotion. It is the remote effects of theſe paſſions which are agreeable; the immediate effects are miſchief to the perſon againſt whom they are directed. But it is the immediate, and not the remote effects of objects which render them agreeable or diſagreeable to the imagination. A priſon is certainly more uſeful to the public than a palace; and the perſon who founds the one is generally directed by a much juſter ſpirit of patriotiſm, than he who builds the other. But the immediate effects of a priſon, the confinement of the wretches ſhut up in it, are diſagreeable, and the imagination either does not take time to trace out the remote ones, or ſees them at too great a diſtance to be much

much affected by them. A priſon, therefore, will always be a diſagreeable object; and the fitter it is for the purpoſe for which it was intended, it will be the more ſo. A palace, on the contrary will always be agreeable; yet its remote effects may often be inconvenient to the public. It may ſerve to promote luxury, and ſet the example of the diſſolution of manners. Its immediate effects, however, the conveniency, the pleaſure, and the gaiety of the people who live in it, being all agreeable, and ſuggeſting to the imagination a thouſand agreeable ideas, that faculty generally reſts upon them, and ſeldom goes farther in tracing its more diſtant conſequences. Trophies of the inſtruments of muſic or of agriculture, imitated in painting or in ſtucco, make a common and an agreeable ornament of our halls and dining rooms. A trophy of the ſame kind, compoſed of the inſtruments of ſurgery, of diſſecting and amputation-knives, of ſaws for cutting the bones, of trepanning inſtruments, &c. would be abſurd and ſhocking. Inſtruments of ſurgery, however, are always more finely poliſhed, and generally more nicely adapted to the purpoſes for which they are intended, than inſtruments of agriculture. The remote effects of them too, the health of the patient, is

agreeable;

agreeable; yet as the immediate effect of them is pain and ſuffering, the ſight of them always diſpleaſes us. Inſtruments of war are agreeable, though their immediate effect may ſeem to be in the ſame manner pain and ſuffering. But then it is the pain and ſuffering of our enemies, with whom we have no ſympathy. With regard to us, they are immediately connected with the agreeable ideas of courage, victory, and honour. They are themſelves, therefore, ſuppoſed to make one of the nobleſt parts of dreſs, and the imitation of them one of the fineſt ornaments of architecture. It is the ſame caſe with the qualities of the mind. The ancient ſtoics were of opinion, that as the world was governed by the all-ruling providence of a wiſe, powerful, and good God, every ſingle event ought to be regarded, as making a neceſſary part of the plan of the univerſe, and as tending to promote the general order and happineſs of the whole: that the vices and follies of mankind, therefore, made as neceſſary a part of this plan as their wiſdom or their virtue; and by that eternal art which educes good from ill, were made to tend equally to the proſperity and perfection of the great ſyſtem of nature. No ſpeculation of this kind, however, how deeply ſoever it might

be rooted in the mind, could diminish our natural abhorrence for vice, whose immediate effects are so destructive, and whose remote ones are too distant to be traced by the imagination.

It is the same case with those passions we have been just now considering. Their immediate effects are so disagreeable, that even when they are most justly provoked there is still something about them which disgusts us. These, therefore, are the only passions of which the expressions, as I formerly observed, do not dispose and prepare us to sympathize with them, before we are informed of the cause which excites them. The plaintive voice of misery, when heard at a distance, will not allow us to be indifferent about the person from whom it comes. As soon as it strikes our ear, it interests us in his fortune, and, if continued, forces us almost involuntarily to fly to his assistance. The sight of a smiling countenance, in the same manner, elevates even the pensive into that gay and airy mood, which disposes him to sympathize with, and share the joy which it expresses; and he feels his heart, which with thought and care was before that shrunk and depressed, instantly expanded and elated. But it is quite otherwise with the expressions of hatred and resent-

reſentment. The hoarſe, boiſterous, and diſcordant voice of anger, when heard at a diſtance, inſpires us either with fear or averſion. We do not fly towards it, as to one who cries out with pain and agony. Women, and men of weak nerves, tremble and are overcome with fear, though ſenſible that themſelves are not the objects of the anger. They conceive, fear, however, by putting themſelves in the ſituation of the perſon who is ſo. Even thoſe of ſtouter hearts are diſturbed; not indeed enough to make them afraid, but enough to make them angry; for anger is the paſſion which they would feel in the ſituation of the other perſon. It is the ſame caſe with hatred. Mere expreſſions of ſpite inſpire it againſt nobody, but the man who uſes them. Both theſe paſſions are by nature the objects of our averſion. Their diſagreeable and boiſterous appearance never excites, never prepares, and often diſturbs our ſympathy. Grief does not more powerfully engage and attract us to the perſon in whom we obſerve it, than theſe, while we are ignorant of their cauſe, diſguſt and detach us from him. It was, it ſeems, the intention of Nature, that thoſe rougher and more unamiable emotions, which drive men from one another, ſhould be leſs eaſily and more rarely communicated.

When muſic imitates the modulations of grief or joy, it either actually inſpires us with thoſe paſſions, or at leaſt puts us in the mood which diſpoſes us to conceive them. But when it imitates the notes of anger, it inſpires us with fear. Joy, grief, love, admiration, devotion, are all of them paſſions which are naturally muſical. Their natural tones are all ſoft, clear, and melodious; and they naturally expreſs themſelves in periods which are diſtinguiſhed by regular pauſes, and which upon that account are eaſily adapted to the regular returns of the correſpondent airs of a tune. The voice of anger, on the contrary, and of all the paſſions which are akin to it, is harſh and diſcordant. Its periods too are all irregular, ſometimes very long, and ſometimes very ſhort, and diſtinguiſhed by no regular pauſes. It is with difficulty, therefore, that muſic can imitate any of thoſe paſſions; and the muſic which does imitate them is not the moſt agreeable. A whole entertainment may conſiſt, without any impropriety, of the imitation of the ſocial and agreeable paſſions. It would be a ſtrange entertainment which conſiſted altogether of the imitations of hatred and reſentment.

If thoſe paſſions are diſagreeable to the ſpectator they are not leſs ſo to the perſon who

who feels them. Hatred and anger are the greateſt poiſon to the happineſs of a good mind. There is, in the very feeling of thoſe paſſions, ſomething harſh, jarring, and convulſive, ſomething that tears and diſtracts the breaſt, and is altogether deſtructive of that compoſure and tranquillity of mind which is ſo neceſſary to happineſs, and which is beſt promoted by the contrary paſſions of gratitude and love. It is not the value of what they loſe by the perfidy and ingratitude of thoſe they live with, which the generous and humane are moſt apt to regret. Whatever they may have loſt, they can generally be very happy without it. What moſt diſturbs them is the idea of perfidy and ingratitude exerciſed towards themſelves; and the diſcordant and diſagreeable paſſions which this excites, conſtitute, in their own opinion, the chief part of the injury which they ſuffer.

How many things are requiſite to render the gratification of reſentment completely agreeable, and to make the ſpectator thoroughly ſympathize with our revenge? The provocation muſt firſt of all be ſuch that we ſhould become contemptible, and be expoſed to perpetual inſults, if we did not, in ſome meaſure, reſent it. Smaller offences are always better neglected; nor is there any thing

more deſpicable than that froward and captious humour which takes fire upon every ſlight occaſion of quarrel. We ſhould reſent more from a ſenſe of the propriety of reſentment, from a ſenſe that mankind expect and require it of us, than becauſe we feel in ourſelves the furies of that diſagreeable paſſion. There is no paſſion, of which the human mind is capable, concerning whoſe juſtneſs we ought to be ſo doubtful, concerning whoſe indulgence we ought ſo carefully to conſult our natural ſenſe of propriety, or ſo diligently to conſider what will be the ſentiments of the cool and impartial ſpectator. Magnanimity, or a regard to maintain our own rank and dignity in ſociety, is the only motive which can ennoble the expreſſions of this diſagreeable paſſion. This motive muſt characterize our whole ſtyle and deportment. Theſe muſt be plain, open, and direct; determined without poſitiveneſs, and elevated without inſolence; not only free from petulance and low ſcurrility, but generous candid and full of all proper regards, even for the perſon who has offended us. It muſt appear, in ſhort, from our whole manner, without our labouring affectedly to expreſs it, that paſſion has not extinguiſhed our humanity; and that if we yield to the dictates of revenge, it is with

reluctance,

reluctance, from neceſſity, and in conſequence of great and repeated provocations. When reſentment is guarded and qualified in this manner, it may be admitted to be even generous and noble.

CHAP. IV.

Of the ſocial Paſſions.

As it is a divided ſympathy which renders the whole ſet of paſſions juſt now mentioned, upon moſt occaſions, ſo ungraceful and diſagreeable; ſo there is another ſet oppoſite to theſe, which a redoubled ſympathy renders almoſt always peculiarly agreeable and becoming. Generoſity, humanity, kindneſs, compaſſion, mutual friendſhip, and eſteem, all the ſocial and benevolent affections, when expreſſed in the countenance or behaviour, even towards thoſe who are not peculiarly connected with ourſelves, pleaſe the indifferent ſpectator upon almoſt every occaſion. His ſympathy with the perſon who feels thoſe paſſions exactly coincides with his concern for the perſon who is the object of them. The intereſt, which, as a man, he is obliged to take in the happineſs

of this laſt, enlivens his fellow-feeling with the ſentiments of the other, whoſe emotions are employed about the ſame object. We have always, therefore the ſtrongeſt diſpoſition to ſympathize with the benevolent affections. They appear in every reſpect agreeable to us. We enter into the ſatisfaction both of the perſon who feels them, and of the perſon who is the object of them. For as to be the object of hatred and indignation gives more pain than all the evil which a brave man can fear from his enemies; ſo there is a ſatisfaction in the conſciouſneſs of being beloved, which, to a perſon of delicacy and ſenſibility, is of more importance to happineſs than all the advantage which he can expect to derive from it. What character is ſo deteſtable as that of one who takes pleaſure to ſow diſſenſion among friends, and to turn their moſt tender love into mortal hatred? Yet wherein does the atrocity of this ſo much abhorred injury conſiſt? Is it in depriving them of the frivolous good offices, which, had their friendſhip continued, they might have expected from one another? It is in depriving them of that friendſhip itſelf, in robbing them of each other's affections, from which both derived ſo much ſatisfaction; it is in diſturbing the harmony of their

their hearts, and putting an end to that happy commerce which had before ſubſiſted between them. Theſe affections, that harmony, this commerce, are felt, not only by the tender and the delicate, but by the rudeſt vulgar of mankind, to be of more importance to happineſs than all the little ſervices which could be expected to flow from them.

The ſentiment of love is, in itſelf, agreeable to the perſon who feels it. It ſoothes and compoſes the breaſt, ſeems to favour the vital motions, and to promote the healthful ſtate of the human conſtitution; and it is rendered ſtill more delightful by the conſciouſneſs of the gratitude and ſatisfaction which it muſt excite in him who is the object of it. Their mutual regard renders them happy in one another, and ſympathy, with this mutual regard, makes them agreeable to every other perſon. With what pleaſure do we look upon a family through the whole of which reign mutual love and eſteem, where the parents and children are companions for one another, without any other difference than what is made by reſpectful affection on the one ſide, and kind indulgence on the other; where freedom and fondneſs, mutual raillery and mutual kindneſs, ſhow that no oppoſition of intereſt divides the brothers,

nor

nor any rivalſhip of favour ſets the ſiſters at variance, and where every thing preſents us with the idea of peace, cheerfulneſs, harmony, and contentment? On the contrary, how uneaſy are we made when we go into a houſe in which jarring contention ſets one half of thoſe who dwell in it againſt the other; where, amidſt affected ſmoothneſs and complaiſance, ſuſpicious looks and ſudden ſtarts of paſſion betray the mutual jealouſies which burn within them, and which are every moment ready to burſt out through all the reſtraints which the preſence of the company impoſes?

Thoſe amiable paſſions, even when they are acknowledged to be exceſſive, are never regarded with averſion. There is ſomething agreeable even in the weakneſs of friendſhip and humanity. The too tender mother, and the too indulgent father, the too generous and affectionate friend, may ſometimes, perhaps, on account of the ſoftneſs of their natures, be looked upon with a ſpecies of pity, in which, however, there is a mixture of love; but can never be regarded with hatred and averſion, nor even with contempt, unleſs by the moſt brutal and worthleſs of mankind. It is always with concern, with ſympathy and kindneſs, that we blame them for the extra-

vagance

vagance of their attachment. There is a helpleſſneſs in the character of extreme humanity which more than any thing intereſts our pity. There is nothing in itſelf which renders it either ungraceful or diſagreeable. We only regret that it is unfit for the world, becauſe the world is unworthy of it, and becauſe it muſt expoſe the perſon who is endowed with it as a prey to the perfidy and ingratitude of inſinuating falſehood, and to a thouſand pains and uneaſineſſes, which, of all men, he the leaſt deſerves to feel, and which generally too he is, of all men, the leaſt capable of ſupporting. It is quite otherwiſe with hatred and reſentment. Too violent a propenſity to thoſe deteſtable paſſions, renders a perſon the object of univerſal dread and abhorrence, who like a wild beaſt, ought, we think, to be hunted out of all civil ſociety.

CHAP. V.

Of the ſelfiſh Paſſions.

BESIDES thoſe two oppoſite ſets of paſſions, the ſocial and unſocial, there is another which holds a ſort of middle place between them;

them; is never either ſo graceful as is ſometimes the one ſet, nor is ever ſo odious as is ſometimes the other. Grief and joy, when conceived upon account of our own private good or bad fortune, conſtitute this third ſet of paſſions. Even when exceſſive, they are never ſo diſagreeable as exceſſive reſentment, becauſe no oppoſite ſympathy can ever intereſt us againſt them: and when moſt ſuitable to their objects, they are never ſo agreeable as impartial humanity and juſt benevolence; becauſe no double ſympathy can ever intereſt us for them. There is, however, this difference between grief and joy, that we are generally moſt diſpoſed to ſympathize with ſmall joys and great ſorrows. The man who, by ſome ſudden revolution of fortune, is lifted up all at once into a condition of life, greatly above what he had formerly lived in, may be aſſured that the congratulations of his beſt friends are not all of them perfectly ſincere. An upſtart, though of the greateſt merit, is generally diſagreeable, and a ſentiment of envy commonly prevents us from heartily ſympathizing with his joy. If he has any judgment, he is ſenſible of this, and inſtead of appearing to be elated with his good fortune, he endeavours, as much as he can, to ſmother his joy, and keep down that elevation

tion of mind with which his new circumſtances naturally inſpire him. He affects the ſame plainneſs of dreſs, and the ſame modeſty of behaviour, which became him in his former ſtation. He redoubles his attention to his old friends, and endeavours more than ever to be humble, aſſiduous, and complaiſant. And this is the behaviour which in his ſituation we moſt approve of; becauſe we expect, it ſeems, that he ſhould have more ſympathy with our envy and averſion to his happineſs, than we have to his happineſs. It is ſeldom that with all this he ſucceeds. We ſuſpect the ſincerity of his humility, and he grows weary of this conſtraint. In a little time, therefore, he generally leaves all his old friends behind him, ſome of the meaneſt of them excepted, who may, perhaps, condeſcend to become his dependants: nor does he always acquire any new ones; the pride of his new connections is as much affronted at finding him their equal, as that of his old ones had been by his becoming their ſuperior: and it requires the moſt obſtinate and perſevering modeſty to atone for this mortification to either. He generally grows weary too ſoon, and is provoked, by the ſullen and ſuſpicious pride of the one, and by the ſaucy contempt of the other, to treat the

firſt with neglect, and the ſecond with petulance, till at laſt he grows habitually inſolent, and forfeits the eſteem of all. If the chief part of human happineſs ariſes from the conſciouſneſs of being beloved, as I believe it does, thoſe ſudden changes of fortune ſeldom contribute much to happineſs. He is happieſt who advances more gradually to greatneſs, whom the public deſtines to every ſtep of his preferment long before he arrives at it, in whom, upon that account, when it comes, it can excite no extravagant joy, and with regard to whom it cannot reaſonably create either any jealouſy in thoſe he overtakes, or any envy in thoſe he leaves behind.

Mankind, however, more readily ſympathize with thoſe ſmaller joys which flow from leſs important cauſes. It is decent to be humble amidſt great proſperity; but we can ſcarce expreſs too much ſatisfaction in all the little occurrences of common life, in the company with which we ſpent the evening laſt night, in the entertainment that was ſet before us, in what was ſaid and what was done, in all the little incidents of the preſent converſation, and in all thoſe frivolous nothings which fill up the void of human life. Nothing is more graceful than habitual cheerfulneſs, which is always founded upon a peculiar

liar reliſh for all the little pleaſures which common occurrences afford. We readily ſympathize with it: it inſpires us with the ſame joy, and makes every trifle turn up to us in the ſame agreeable aſpect in which it preſents itſelf to the perſon endowed with this happy diſpoſition. Hence it is that youth, the ſeaſon of gaiety, ſo eaſily engages our affections. That propenſity to joy which ſeems even to animate the bloom, and to ſparkle from the eyes of youth and beauty, though in a perſon of the ſame ſex, exalts, even the aged, to a more joyous mood than ordinary. They forget, for a time, their infirmities, and abandon themſelves to thoſe agreeable ideas and emotions to which they have long been ſtrangers, but which, when the preſence of ſo much happineſs recals them to their breaſt, take their place there, like old acquaintance, from whom they are ſorry to have ever been parted, and whom they embrace more heartily upon account of this long ſeparation.

It is quite otherwiſe with grief. Small vexations excite no ſympathy, but deep affliction calls forth the greateſt. The man who is made uneaſy by every little diſagreeable incident, who is hurt if either the cook or the butler have failed in the leaſt article of their duty,

duty, who feels every defect in the higheſt ceremonial of politeneſs, whether it be ſhewn to himſelf or to any other perſon, who takes it amiſs that his intimate friend did not bid him good-morrow when they met in the forenoon, and that his brother hummed a tune all the time he himſelf was telling a ſtory; who is put out of humour by the badneſs of the weather when in the country, by the badneſs of the roads when upon a journey, and by the want of company, and dulneſs of all public diverſions when in town: ſuch a perſon, I ſay, though he ſhould have ſome reaſon, will ſeldom meet with much ſympathy. Joy is a pleaſant emotion, and we gladly abandon ourſelves to it upon the ſlighteſt occaſion. We readily, therefore, ſympathize with it in others, whenever we are not prejudiced by envy. But grief is painful, and the mind, even when it is our own misfortune, naturally reſiſts and recoils from it. We would endeavour either not to conceive it at all, or to ſhake it off as ſoon as we have conceived it. Our averſion to grief will not, indeed, always hinder us from conceiving it in our own caſe upon very trifling occaſion, but it conſtantly prevents us from ſympathizing with it in others when excited by the like frivolous cauſes: for our ſympathetic paſſions are al-

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ways leſs irreſiſtible than our original ones. There is, beſides, a malice in mankind, which not only prevents all ſympathy with little uneaſineſſes, but renders them in ſome meaſure diverting. Hence the delight which we all take in raillery, and in the ſmall vexation which we obſerve in our companion when he is puſhed, and urged, and teaſed upon all ſides. Men of the moſt ordinary good-breeding diſſemble the pain which any little incident may give them, and thoſe who are more thoroughly formed to ſociety, turn, of their own accord, all ſuch incidents into raillery, as they know their companions will do for them. The habit which a man, who lives in the world, has acquired of conſidering how every thing that concerns himſelf will appear to others, makes thoſe frivolous calamities turn up in the ſame ridiculous light to him, in which he knows they will certainly be conſidered by them.

Our ſympathy, on the contrary, with deep diſtreſs, is very ſtrong and very ſincere. It is unneceſſary to give an inſtance. We weep even at the feigned repreſentation of a tragedy. If you labour, therefore, under any ſignal calamity, if by ſome extraordinary misfortune you are fallen into poverty, into diſeaſes, into diſgrace and diſappointment;

even though your own fault may have been, in part, the occaſion, yet you may generally depend upon the ſincereſt ſympathy of all your friends, and, as far as intereſt and honour will permit, upon their kindeſt aſſiſtance too. But if your misfortune is not of this dreadful kind, if you have only been a little baulked in your ambition, if you have only been jilted by your miſtreſs, or are only hen-pecked by your wife, lay your account with the raillery of all your acquaintance.

SECTION III.

Of the Effects of Proſperity and Adverſity upon the Judgment of Mankind with regard to the Propriety of Action; and why it is more eaſy to obtain their Approbation in the one ſtate than in the other.

CHAP. I.

That though our ſympathy with ſorrow is generally a more lively ſenſation than our ſympathy with joy, it commonly falls much more ſhort of the violence of what is naturally felt by the perſon principally concerned.

OUR ſympathy with ſorrow, though not more real, has been more taken notice of than our ſympathy with joy. The word ſympathy, in its moſt proper and primitive ſignification, denotes our fellow-feeling with the ſufferings, not that with the enjoyments of others. A late ingenious and ſubtle philoſopher thought it neceſſary to prove, by

arguments, that we had a real ſympathy with joy, and that congratulation was a principle of human nature. Nobody, I believe, ever thought it neceſſary to prove that compaſſion was ſuch.

Firſt of all, our ſympathy with ſorrow is, in ſome ſenſe, more univerſal than that with joy. Though ſorrow is exceſſive, we may ſtill have ſome fellow-feeling with it. What we feel does not, indeed, in this caſe, amount to that complete ſympathy, to that perfect harmony and correſpondence of ſentiments which conſtitutes approbation. We do not weep, and exclaim, and lament, with the ſufferer. We are ſenſible, on the contrary, of his weakneſs and of the extravagance of his paſſion, and yet often feel a very ſenſible concern upon his account. But if we do not entirely enter into, and go along with, the joy of another, we have no ſort of regard or fellow-feeling for it. The man who ſkips and dances about with that intemperate and ſenſeleſs joy which we cannot accompany him in, is the object of our contempt and indignation.

Pain, beſides, whether of mind or body, is a more pungent ſenſation than pleaſure, and our ſympathy with pain, though it falls greatly ſhort of what is naturally felt by the ſufferer,

ſufferer, is generally a more lively and diſtinct perception than our ſympathy with pleaſure, though this laſt often approaches more nearly, as I ſhall ſhew immediately, to the natural vivacity of the original paſſion.

Over and above all this, we often ſtruggle to keep down our ſympathy with the ſorrow of others. Whenever we are not under the obſervation of the ſufferer, we endeavour, for our own ſake, to ſuppreſs it as much as we can, and we are not always ſucceſsful. The oppoſition which we make to it, and the reluctance with which we yield to it, neceſſarily oblige us to take more particular notice of it. But we never have occaſion to make this oppoſition to our ſympathy with joy. If there is any envy in the caſe, we never feel the leaſt propenſity towards it; and if there is none, we give way to it without any reluctance. On the contrary, as we are always aſhamed of our own envy, we often pretend, and ſometimes really wiſh to ſympathize with the joy of others, when by that diſagreeable ſentiment we are diſqualified from doing ſo. We are glad, we ſay, on account of our neighbour's good fortune, when in our hearts, perhaps, we are really ſorry. We often feel a ſympathy with ſorrow when we would wiſh to be rid of it; and we often miſs

that with joy when we would be glad to have it. The obvious obſervation, therefore, which it naturally falls in our way to make, is, that our propenſity to ſympathize with ſorrow muſt be very ſtrong, and our inclination to ſympathize with joy very weak.

Notwithſtanding this prejudice, however, I will venture to affirm, that, when there is no envy in the caſe, our propenſity to ſympathize with joy is much ſtronger than our propenſity to ſympathize with ſorrow; and that our fellow-feeling for the agreeable emotion approaches much more nearly to the vivacity of what is naturally felt by the perſons principally concerned, than that which we conceive for the painful one.

We have ſome indulgence for that exceſſive grief which we cannot entirely go along with. We know what a prodigious effort is requiſite before the ſufferer can bring down his emotions to complete harmony and concord with thoſe of the ſpectator. Though he fails, therefore, we eaſily pardon him. But we have no ſuch indulgence for the intemperance of joy; becauſe we are not conſcious that any ſuch vaſt effort is requiſite to bring it down to what we can entirely enter into. The man who, under the greateſt calamities, can command his ſorrow, ſeems worthy

worthy of the higheſt admiration; but he who, in the fulneſs of proſperity, can in the ſame manner maſter his joy, ſeems hardly to deſerve any praiſe. We are ſenſible that there is a much wider interval in the one caſe than in the other, between what is naturally felt by the perſon principally concerned, and what the ſpectator can entirely go along with.

What can be added to the happineſs of the man who is in health, who is out of debt, and has a clear conſcience? To one in this ſituation, all acceſſions of fortune may properly be ſaid to be ſuperfluous; and if he is much elevated upon account of them, it muſt be the effect of the moſt frivolous levity. This ſituation, however, may very well be called the natural and ordinary ſtate of mankind. Notwithſtanding the preſent miſery and depravity of the world, ſo juſtly lamented, this really is the ſtate of the greater part of men. The greater part of men, therefore, cannot find any great difficulty in elevating themſelves to all the joy which any acceſſion to this ſituation can well excite in their companion.

But though little can be added to this ſtate, much may be taken from it. Though between this condition and the higheſt pitch of

human prosperity, the interval is but a trifle; between it and the lowest depth of misery, the distance is immense and prodigious. Adversity, on this account, necessarily depresses the mind of the sufferer much more below its natural state, than prosperity can elevate him above it. The spectator, therefore, must find it much more difficult to sympathize entirely, and keep perfect time, with his sorrow, than thoroughly to enter into his joy, and must depart much further from his own natural and ordinary temper of mind in the one case than in the other. It is on this account, that though our sympathy with sorrow is often a more pungent sensation than our sympathy with joy, it always falls much more short of the violence of what is naturally felt by the person principally concerned.

It is agreeable to sympathize with joy; and wherever envy does not oppose it, our heart abandons itself with satisfaction to the highest transports of that delightful sentiment. But it is painful to go along with grief, and we always enter into it with reluctance*. When we attend to the representation

* It has been objected to me, that as I found the sentiment of approbation, which is always agreeable, upon sympathy, it is inconsistent with my system to admit any disagreeable sympathy.

ation of a tragedy, we ſtruggle againſt that ſympathetic ſorrow which the entertainment inſpires as long as we can, and we give way to it at laſt only when we can no longer avoid it: we even then endeavour to cover our concern from the company. If we ſhed any tears, we carefully conceal them, and are afraid, leſt the ſpectators, not entering into this exceſſive tenderneſs, ſhould regard it as effeminacy and weakneſs. The wretch whoſe misfortunes call upon our compaſſion feels with what reluctance we are likely to enter into his ſorrow, and therefore propoſes his grief to us with fear and heſitation: he even ſmothers the half of it, and is aſhamed, upon account of this hard-heartedneſs of mankind, to give vent to the fulneſs of his affliction. It is otherwiſe with the man who riots in joy and ſucceſs. Wherever envy does not intereſt us againſt him, he expects our com-

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thy. I anſwer, that in the ſentiment of approbation there are two things to be taken notice of; firſt, the ſympathetic paſſion of the ſpectator; and, ſecondly, the emotion which ariſes from his obſerving the perfect coincidence between this ſympathetic paſſion in himſelf, and the original paſſion in the perſon principally concerned. This laſt emotion, in which the ſentiment of approbation properly conſiſts, is always agreeable and delightful. The other may either be agreeable or diſagreeable, according to the nature of the original paſſion, whoſe features it muſt always, in ſome meaſure, retain.

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pleteſt ſympathy. He does not fear, therefore, to announce himſelf with ſhouts of exultation, in full confidence that we are heartily diſpoſed to go along with him.

Why ſhould we be more aſhamed to weep than to laugh before company? We may often have as real occaſion to do the one as to do the other: but we always feel that the ſpectators are more likely to go along with us in the agreeable, than in the painful emotion. It is always miſerable to complain, even when we are oppreſſed by the moſt dreadful calamities. But the triumph of victory is not always ungraceful. Prudence, indeed, would often adviſe us to bear our proſperity with more moderation; becauſe prudence would teach us to avoid that envy which this very triumph is, more than any thing, apt to excite.

How hearty are the acclamations of the mob, who never bear any envy to their ſuperiors, at a triumph or a public entry? And how ſedate and moderate is commonly their grief at an execution? Our ſorrow at a funeral generally amounts to no more than an affected gravity: but our mirth at a chriſtening or a marriage is always from the heart, and without any affectation. Upon theſe, and all ſuch joyous occaſions, our ſatisfaction,

tion, though not ſo durable, is often as lively as that of the perſons principally concerned. Whenever we cordially congratulate our friends, which, however, to the diſgrace of human nature, we do but ſeldom, their joy literally becomes our joy: we are, for the moment, as happy as they are: our heart ſwells and overflows with real pleaſure: joy and complacency ſparkle from our eyes, and animate every feature of our countenance, and every geſture of our body.

But, on the contrary, when we condole with our friends in their afflictions, how little do we feel in compariſon of what they feel? We ſit down by them, we look at them, and while they relate to us the circumſtances of their misfortune, we liſten to them with gravity and attention. But while their narration is every moment interrupted by thoſe natural burſts of paſſion which often ſeem almoſt to choak them in the midſt of it; how far are the languid emotions of our hearts from keeping time to the tranſports of theirs? We may be ſenſible at the ſame time, that their paſſion is natural, and no greater than what we ourſelves might feel upon the like occaſion. We may even inwardly reproach ourſelves with our own want of ſenſibility, and perhaps, on that account, work ourſelves

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up into an artificial ſympathy, which, however, when it is raiſed, is always the ſlighteſt and moſt tranſitory imaginable; and generally, as ſoon as we have left the room, vaniſhes, and is gone for ever. Nature, it ſeems, when ſhe loaded us with our own ſorrows, thought that they were enough, and therefore did not command us to take any further ſhare in thoſe of others, than what was neceſſary to prompt us to relieve them.

It is on account of this dull ſenſibility to the afflictions of others, that magnanimity amidſt great diſtreſs appears always ſo divinely graceful. His behaviour is genteel and agreeable who can maintain his cheerfulneſs amidſt a number of frivolous diſaſters. But he appears to be more than mortal who can ſupport in the ſame manner the moſt dreadful calamities. We feel what an immenſe effort is requiſite to ſilence thoſe violent emotions which naturally agitate and diſtract thoſe in his ſituation. We are amazed to find that he can command himſelf ſo entirely. His firmneſs, at the ſame time, perfectly coincides with our inſenſibility. He makes no demand upon us for that more exquiſite degree of ſenſibility which we find, and which we are mortified to find, that we do not poſſeſs. There is the moſt perfect correſpondence be-

tween his ſentiments and ours, and on that account the moſt perfect propriety in his behaviour. It is a propriety too, which, from our experience of the uſual weakneſs of human nature, we could not reaſonably have expected he ſhould be able to maintain. We wonder with ſurpriſe and aſtoniſhment at that ſtrength of mind which is capable of ſo noble and generous an effort. The ſentiment of complete ſympathy and approbation mixed and animated with wonder and ſurpriſe, conſtitutes what is properly called admiration, as has already been more than once taken notice of. Cato, ſurrounded on all ſides by his enemies, unable to reſiſt them, diſdaining to ſubmit to them, and reduced by the proud maxims of that age to the neceſſity of deſtroying himſelf; yet never ſhrinking from his misfortunes, never ſupplicating with the lamentable voice of wretchedneſs, thoſe miſerable ſympathetic tears which we are always ſo unwilling to give; but on the contrary, arming himſelf with manly fortitude, and the moment before he executes his fatal reſolution, giving with his uſual tranquillity, all neceſſary orders for the ſafety of his friends; appears to Seneca, that great preacher of inſenſibility, a ſpectacle, which even the gods themſelves

themſelves might behold with pleaſure and admiration.

Whenever we meet in common life, with any examples of ſuch heroic magnanimity, we are always extremely affected. We are more apt to weep and ſhed tears for ſuch as in this manner ſeem to feel nothing for themſelves, than for thoſe who give way to all the weakneſs of ſorrow: and in this particular caſe the ſympathetic grief of the ſpectator appears to go beyond the original paſſion in the perſon principally concerned. The friends of Socrates all wept when he drank the laſt potion, while he himſelf expreſſed the gayeſt and moſt cheerful tranquillity. Upon all ſuch occaſions the ſpectator makes no effort, and has no occaſion to make any, in order to conquer his ſympathetic ſorrow. He is under no fear that it will tranſport him to any thing that is extravagant and improper; he is rather pleaſed with the ſenſibility of his own heart, and gives way to it with complacence and ſelf-approbation. He gladly indulges, therefore, the moſt melancholy views which can naturally occur to him concerning the calamity of his friend, for whom, perhaps he never felt ſo exquiſitely before, the tender and tearful paſſion of love. But it

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is quite otherwiſe with the perſon principally concerned. He is obliged, as much as poſſible, to turn away his eyes from whatever is either naturally terrible or diſagreeable in his ſituation. Too ſerious an attention to thoſe circumſtances, he fears might make ſo violent an impreſſion upon him, that he could no longer keep within the bounds of moderation, or render himſelf the object of the complete ſympathy and approbation of the ſpectators. He fixes his thoughts, therefore, upon thoſe only which are agreeable, the applauſe and admiration which he is about to deſerve by the heroic magnanimity of his behaviour. To feel that he is capable of ſo noble and generous an effort, to feel that in this dreadful ſituation he can ſtill act as he would deſire to act, animates and tranſports him with joy, and enables him to ſupport that triumphant gaiety which ſeems to exult in the victory he thus gains over his misfortunes.

On the contrary, he always appears, in ſome meaſure, mean and deſpicable, who is ſunk in ſorrow and dejection upon account of any calamity of his own. We cannot bring ourſelves to feel for him what he feels for himſelf, and what, perhaps, we ſhould feel for ourſelves if in his ſituation: we therefore

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deſpiſe him; unjuſtly, perhaps, if any ſentiment could be regarded as unjuſt, to which we are by nature irreſiſtibly determined. The weakneſs of ſorrow never appears in any reſpect agreeable, except when it ariſes from what we feel for others more than from what we feel for ourſelves. A ſon, upon the death of an indulgent and reſpectable father, may give way to it without much blame. His ſorrow is chiefly founded upon a ſort of ſympathy with his departed parent; and we readily enter into this humane emotion. But if he ſhould indulge the ſame weakneſs upon account of any misfortune which affected himſelf only, he would no longer meet with any ſuch indulgence. If he ſhould be reduced to beggary and ruin, if he ſhould be expoſed to the moſt dreadful dangers, if he ſhould even be led out to a public execution, and there ſhed one ſingle tear upon the ſcaffold, he would diſgrace himſelf for ever in the opinion of all the gallant and generous part of mankind. Their compaſſion for him, however, would be very ſtrong and very ſincere; but as it would ſtill fall ſhort of this exceſſive weakneſs, they would have no pardon for the man who could thus expoſe himſelf in the eyes of the world. His behaviour would affect them with

with ſhame rather than with ſorrow; and the diſhonour which he had thus brought upon himſelf would appear to them the moſt lamentable circumſtance in his misfortune. How did it diſgrace the memory of the intrepid Duke of Biron, who had ſo often braved death in the field, that he wept upon the ſcaffold, when he beheld the ſtate to which he was fallen, and remembered the favour and the glory from which his own raſhneſs had ſo unfortunately thrown him.

CHAP. II.

Of the origin of Ambition, and of the diſtinction of Ranks.

IT is becauſe mankind are diſpoſed to ſympathize more entirely with our joy than with our ſorrow, that we make parade of our riches, and conceal our poverty. Nothing is ſo mortifying as to be obliged to expoſe our diſtreſs to the view of the public, and to feel, that though our ſituation is open to the eyes of all mankind, no mortal conceives for us the half of what we ſuffer. Nay, it is chiefly

from this regard to the ſentiments of mankind, that we purſue riches and avoid poverty. For to what purpoſe is all the toil and buſtle of this world? what is the end of avarice and ambition, of the purſuit of wealth, of power and pre-eminence? Is it to ſupply the neceſſities of nature? The wages of the meaneſt labourer can ſupply them. We ſee that they afford him food and clothing, the comforts of a houſe and of a family. If we examine his œconomy with rigour, we ſhould find that he ſpends a great part of them upon conveniences, which may be regarded as ſuperfluities, and that, upon extraordinary occaſions, he can give ſomething even to vanity and diſtinction: what then is the cauſe of our averſion to his ſituation, and why ſhould thoſe who have been educated in the higher ranks of life regard it as worſe than death, to be reduced to live, even without labour, upon the ſame ſimple fare with him, to dwell under the ſame lowly roof, and to be clothed in the ſame humble attire? Do they imagine that their ſtomach is better, or their ſleep ſounder, in a palace than in a cottage? The contrary has been ſo often obſerved, and, indeed, is ſo very obvious, though it had never been obſerved, that there is nobody ignorant of it. From whence, then, ariſes that emula-

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tion which runs through all the different ranks of men, and what are the advantages, which we propose by that great purpose of human life which we call bettering our condition? To be observed, to be attended to, to be taken notice of with sympathy, complacency, and approbation, are all the advantages which we can propose to derive from it. It is the vanity, not the ease or the pleasure, which interests us. But vanity is always founded upon the belief of our being the object of attention and approbation. The rich man glories in his riches, because he feels that they naturally draw upon him the attention of the world, and that mankind are disposed to go along with him in all those agreeable emotions with which the advantages of his situation so readily inspire him. At the thought of this, his heart seems to swell and dilate itself within him, and he is fonder of his wealth, upon this account, than for all the other advantages it procures him. The poor man, on the contrary, is ashamed of his poverty. He feels that it either places him out of the sight of mankind, or that, if they take any notice of him, they have, however, scarce any fellow-feeling with the misery and distress which he suffers. He is mortified upon both accounts; for though to be overlooked,

and to be disapproved of, are things entirely different, yet as obscurity covers us from the daylight of honour and approbation, to feel that we are taken no notice of, necessarily damps the most agreeable hope, and disappoints the most ardent desire, of human nature. The poor man goes out and comes in unheeded, and when in the midst of a crowd, is in the same obscurity as if shut up in his own hovel. Those humble cares and painful attentions which occupy those in his situation, afford no amusement to the dissipated and the gay. They turn away their eyes from him; or if the extremity of his distress forces them to look at him, it is only to spurn so disagreeable an object from among them. The fortunate and the proud wonder at the insolence of human wretchedness, that it should dare to present itself before them, and with the loathsome aspect of its misery presume to disturb the serenity of their happiness. The man of rank and distinction, on the contrary, is observed by all the world. Every body is eager to look at him, and to conceive, at least by sympathy, that joy and exultation with which his circumstances naturally inspire him. His actions are the objects of the public care. Scarce a word, scarce a gesture, can fall from him that is altogether

together neglected. In a great assembly he is the person upon whom all direct their eyes; it is upon him that their passions seem all to wait with expectation, in order to receive that movement and direction which he shall impress upon them; and if his behaviour is not altogether absurd, he has, every moment, an opportunity of interesting mankind, and of rendering himself the object of the observation and fellow-feeling of every body about him. It is this, which notwithstanding the restraint it imposes, notwithstanding the loss of liberty with which it is attended, renders greatness the object of envy, and compensates, in the opinion of mankind, all that toil, all that anxiety, all those mortifications which must be undergone in the pursuit of it; and what is of yet more consequence, all that leisure, all that ease, all that careless security which are forfeited for ever by the acquisition.

When we consider the condition of the great, in those delusive colours in which the imagination is apt to paint it, it seems to be almost the abstract idea of a perfect and happy state. It is the very state which, in all our waking dreams and idle reveries, we had sketched out to ourselves as the final object of all our desires. We feel, therefore, a

peculiar ſympathy with the ſatisfaction of thoſe who are in it. We favour all their inclinations, and forward all their wiſhes. What pity, we think, that any thing ſhould ſpoil and corrupt ſo agreeable a ſituation! We could even wiſh them immortal; and it ſeems hard to us, that death ſhould at laſt put an end to ſuch perfect enjoyment. It is cruel, we think, in Nature to compel them from their exalted ſtations to that humble, but hoſpitable home which ſhe has provided for all her children. Great King, live for ever! is the compliment, which, after the manner of eaſtern adulation, we ſhould readily make them, if experience did not teach us its abſurdity. Every calamity that befalls them, every injury that is done them, excites in the breaſt of the ſpectator ten times more compaſſion and reſentment than he would have felt, had the ſame things happened to other men. It is the misfortunes of Kings only which afford the proper ſubjects for tragedy. They reſemble, in this reſpect, the misfortunes of lovers. Thoſe two ſituations are the chief which intereſt us upon the theatre; becauſe, in ſpite of all that reaſon and experience can tell us to the contrary, the prejudices of the imagination attach to theſe two ſtates a happineſs ſuperior to any other.

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To disturb or to put an end to such perfect enjoyment seems to be the most atrocious of all injuries. The traitor who conspires against the life of his monarch, is thought a greater monster than any other murderer. All the innocent blood that was shed in the civil wars, provoked less indignation than the death of Charles I. A stranger to human nature, who saw the indifference of men about the misery of their inferiors, and the regret and indignation which they feel for the misfortunes and sufferings of those above them, would be apt to imagine, that pain must be more agonizing, and the convulsions of death more terrible, to persons of higher rank than those of meaner stations.

Upon this disposition of mankind, to go along with all the passions of the rich and the powerful, is founded the distinction of ranks, and the order of society. Our obsequiousness to our superiors more frequently arises from our admiration for the advantages of their situation, than from any private expectations of benefit from their good-will. Their benefits can extend but to a few; but their fortunes interest almost every body. We are eager to assist them in completing a system of happiness that approaches so near to perfection; and we desire to serve them

for their own ſake, without any other recompence but the vanity or the honour of obliging them. Neither is our deference to their inclinations founded chiefly, or altogether, upon a regard to the utility of ſuch ſubmiſſion, and to the order of ſociety, which is beſt ſupported by it. Even when the order of ſociety ſeems to require that we ſhould oppoſe them, we can hardly bring ourſelves to do it. That kings are the ſervants of the people, to be obeyed, reſiſted, depoſed, or puniſhed, as the public conveniency may require, is the doctrine of reaſon and philoſophy; but it is not the doctrine of Nature. Nature would teach us to ſubmit to them for their own ſake, to tremble and bow down before their exalted ſtation, to regard their ſmile as a reward ſufficient to compenſate any ſervices, and to dread their diſpleaſure, though no other evil were to follow from it, as the ſevereſt of all mortifications. To treat them in any reſpect as men, to reaſon and diſpute with them upon ordinary occaſions, requires ſuch reſolution, that there are few men whoſe magnanimity can ſupport them in it, unleſs they are likewiſe aſſiſted by familiarity and acquaintance. The ſtrongeſt motives, the moſt furious paſſions, fear, hatred, and reſentment, are ſcarce ſufficient to balance this

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natural diſpoſition to reſpect them: and their conduct muſt, either juſtly or unjuſtly, have excited the higheſt degree of all thoſe paſſions, before the bulk of the people can be brought to oppoſe them with violence, or to deſire to ſee them either puniſhed or depoſed. Even when the people have been brought this length, they are apt to relent every moment, and eaſily relapſe into their habitual ſtate of deference to thoſe whom they have been accuſtomed to look upon as their natural ſuperiors. They cannot ſtand the mortification of their monarch. Compaſſion ſoon takes the place of reſentment, they forget all paſt provocations, their old principles of loyalty revive, and they run to re-eſtabliſh the ruined authority of their old maſters, with the ſame violence with which they had oppoſed it. The death of Charles I. brought about the reſtoration of the royal family. Compaſſion for James II. when he was ſeized by the populace in making his eſcape on ſhipboard, had almoſt prevented the revolution, and made it go on more heavily than before.

Do the great ſeem inſenſible of the eaſy price at which they may acquire the public admiration; or do they ſeem to imagine that to them, as to other men, it muſt be the purchaſe either of ſweat or of blood? By what

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important accompliſhments is the young nobleman inſtructed to ſupport the dignity of his rank, and to render himſelf worthy of that ſuperiority over his fellow-citizens, to which the virtue of his anceſtors had raiſed them? Is it by knowledge, by induſtry, by patience, by ſelf-denial, or by virtue of any kind? As all his words, as all his motions are attended to, he learns an habitual regard to every circumſtance of ordinary behaviour, and ſtudies to perform all thoſe ſmall duties with the moſt exact propriety. As he is conſcious how much he is obſerved, and how much mankind are diſpoſed to favour all his inclinations, he acts, upon the moſt indifferent occaſions, with that freedom and elevation, which the thought of this naturally inſpires. His air, his manner, his deportment, all mark that elegant and graceful ſenſe of his own ſuperiority, which thoſe who are born to inferior ſtations can hardly ever arrive at. Theſe are the arts by which he propoſes to make mankind more eaſily ſubmit to his authority, and to govern their inclinations according to his own pleaſure: and in this he is ſeldom diſappointed. Theſe arts, ſupported by rank and pre-eminence, are, upon ordinary occaſions, ſufficient to govern the world. Lewis XIV. during the

greater part of his reign, was regarded, not only in France, but over all Europe, as the moſt perfect model of a great prince. But what were the talents and virtues by which he acquired this great reputation? Was it by the ſcrupulous and inflexible juſtice of all his undertakings, by the immenſe dangers and difficulties with which they were attended, or by the unwearied and unrelenting application with which he purſued them? Was it by his extenſive knowledge by his exquiſite judgment or by his heroic valour? It was by none of theſe qualities. But he was, firſt of all, the moſt powerful prince in Europe, and conſequently held the higheſt rank among kings; and then, ſays his hiſtorian, "he ſur-"paſſed all his courtiers in the gracefulneſs "of his ſhape, and the majeſtic beauty of "his features. The ſound of his voice, "noble and affecting, gained thoſe hearts "which his preſence intimidated. He had "a ſtep and a deportment which could ſuit "only him and his rank, and which would "have been ridiculous in any other perſon. "The embarraſſment which he occaſioned "to thoſe who ſpoke to him, flattered that "ſecret ſatisfaction with which he felt his "own ſuperiority. The old officer, who "was confounded and faultered in aſking

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"him a favour, and not being able to con-
"clude his diſcourſe, ſaid to him: Sir,
"your majeſty, I hope, will believe that I
"do not tremble thus before your enemies:
"had no difficulty to obtain what he de-
"manded." Theſe frivolous accompliſh-
ments, ſupported by his rank, and, no doubt too, by a degree of other talents and virtues, which ſeems, however, not to have been much above mediocrity, eſtabliſhed this prince in the eſteem of his own age, and have drawn, even from poſterity, a good deal of reſpect for his memory. Compared with theſe, in his own times, and in his own preſence, no other virtue, it ſeems, appeared to have any merit. Knowledge, induſtry, valour, and beneficence, trembled, were abaſhed, and loſt all dignity before them.

But it is not by accompliſhments of this kind, that the man of inferior rank muſt hope to diſtinguiſh himſelf. Politeneſs is ſo much the virtue of the great, that it will do little honour to any body but themſelves. The coxcomb, who imitates their manner, and affects to be eminent by the ſuperior propriety of his ordinary behaviour, is rewarded with a double ſhare of contempt for his folly and preſumption. Why ſhould the man, whom nobody thinks it worth while to look

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at, be very anxious about the manner in which he holds up his head, or diſpoſes of his arms while he walks through a room? He is occupied ſurely with a very ſuperfluous attention, and with an attention too that marks a ſenſe of his own importance, which no other man can go along with. The moſt perfect modeſty and plainneſs, joined to as much negligence as is conſiſtent with the reſpect due to the company ought to be the chief characteriſtics of the behaviour of a private man. If ever he hopes to diſtinguiſh himſelf, it muſt be by more important virtues. He muſt acquire dependants to balance the dependants of the great, and he has no other fund to pay them from, but the labour of his body, and the activity of his mind. He muſt cultivate theſe therefore: he muſt acquire ſuperior knowledge in his profeſſion, and ſuperior induſtry in the exerciſe of it. He muſt be patient in labour, reſolute in danger, and firm in diſtreſs. Theſe talents he muſt bring into public view, by the difficulty, importance, and, at the ſame time, good judgment of his undertakings, and by the ſevere and unrelenting application with which he purſues them. Probity and prudence, generoſity and frankneſs, muſt characterize his behaviour upon all ordinary occaſions;

caſions; and he muſt, at the ſame time, be forward to engage in all thoſe ſituations, in which it requires the greateſt talents and virtues to act with propriety, but in which the greateſt applauſe is to be acquired by thoſe who can acquit themſelves with honour. With what impatience does the man of ſpirit and ambition who is depreſſed by his ſituation, look round for ſome great opportunity to diſtinguiſh himſelf? No circumſtances which can afford this, appear to him undeſirable. He even looks forward with ſatisfaction to the proſpect of foreign war, or civil diſſenſion; and with ſecret tranſport and delight, ſees through all the confuſion and bloodſhed which attend them, the probability of thoſe wiſhed-for occaſions preſenting themſelves, in which he may draw upon himſelf the attention and admiration of mankind. The man of rank and diſtinction, on the contrary, whoſe whole glory conſiſts in the propriety of his ordinary behaviour, who is contented with the humble renown which this can afford him, and has no talents to acquire any other, is unwilling to embarraſs himſelf with what can be attended either with difficulty or diſtreſs. To figure at a ball is his great triumph, and to ſucceed in an intrigue of gallantry, his higheſt exploit. He has an averſion

averſion to all public confuſions, not from the love of mankind, for the great never look upon their inferiors as their fellow-creatures; nor yet from want of courage, for in that he is ſeldom defective; but from a conſciouſneſs that he poſſeſſes none of the virtues which are required in ſuch ſituations, and that the public attention will certainly be drawn away from him by others. He may be willing to expoſe himſelf to ſome little danger, and to make a campaign when it happens to be the faſhion. But he ſhudders with horror at the thought of any ſituation which demands the continual and long exertion of patience, induſtry, fortitude, and application of thought. Theſe virtues are hardly ever to be met with in men who are born to thoſe high ſtations. In all governments accordingly, even in monarchies, the higheſt offices are generally poſſeſſed, and the whole detail of the adminiſtration conducted, by men who are educated in the middle and inferior ranks of life, who have been carried forward by their own induſtry and abilities though loaded with the jealouſy, and oppoſed by the reſentment, of all thoſe who were born their ſuperiors, and to whom the great, after having regarded them firſt with contempt, and afterwards with envy, are at laſt contented to truckle with

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the ſame abject meanneſs with which they deſire that the reſt of mankind ſhould behave to themſelves.

It is the loſs of this eaſy empire over the affections of mankind which renders the fall from greatneſs ſo inſupportable. When the family of the king of Macedon was led in triumph by Paulus Æmilius, their misfortunes, it is ſaid, made them divide with their conqueror the attention of the Roman people. The ſight of the royal children whoſe tender age rendered them inſenſible of their ſituation, ſtruck the ſpectators, amidſt the public rejoicings and proſperity, with the tendereſt ſorrow and compaſſion. The king appeared next in the proceſſion; and ſeemed like one confounded and aſtoniſhed, and bereft of all ſentiment, by the greatneſs of his calamities. His friends and miniſters followed after him. As they moved along, they often caſt their eyes upon their fallen ſovereign, and always burſt into tears at the ſight; their whole behaviour demonſtrating that they thought not of their own misfortune, but were occupied entirely by the ſuperior greatneſs of his. The generous Romans, on the contrary, beheld him with diſdain and indignation, and regarded as unworthy of all compaſſion the man who could be ſo mean-ſpirited as to bear

bear to live under ſuch calamities. Yet what did thoſe calamities amount to? According to the greater part of hiſtorians, he was to ſpend the remainder of his days, under the protection of a powerful and humane people, in a ſtate which in itſelf ſhould ſeem worthy of envy, a ſtate of plenty, eaſe, leiſure, and ſecurity, from which it was impoſſible for him even by his own folly to fall. But he was no longer to be ſurrounded by that admiring mob of fools, flatterers, and dependants, who had formerly been accuſtomed to attend upon all his motions. He was no longer to be gazed upon by multitudes, nor to have it in his power to render himſelf the object of their reſpect, their gratitude, their love, their admiration. The paſſions of nations were no longer to mould themſelves upon his inclinations. This was that inſupportable calamity which bereaved the king of all ſentiment; which made his friends forget their own misfortunes; and which the Roman magnanimity could ſcarce conceive how any man could be ſo mean-ſpirited as to bear to ſurvive.

"Love," ſays my Lord Rochfoucault, "is "commonly ſucceeded by ambition; but am-"bition is hardly ever ſucceeded by love." That paſſion, when once it has got entire poſ-

seſſion of the breaſt, will admit neither a rival nor a ſucceſſor. To thoſe who have been accuſtomed to the poſſeſſion or even to the hope of public admiration, all other pleaſures ſicken and decay. Of all the diſcarded ſtateſmen who for their own eaſe have ſtudied to get the better of ambition, and to deſpiſe thoſe honours which they could no longer arrive at, how few have been able to ſucceed? The greater part have ſpent their time in the moſt liſtleſs and inſipid indolence, chagrined at the thoughts of their own inſignificancy, incapable of being intereſted in the occupations of private life, without enjoyment, except when they talked of their former greatneſs, and without ſatisfaction, except when they were employed in ſome vain project to recover it. Are you in earneſt reſolved never to barter your liberty for the lordly ſervitude of a court, but to live free, fearleſs, and independent? There ſeems to be one way to continue in that virtuous reſolution; and perhaps but one. Never enter the place from whence ſo few have been able to return; never come within the circle of ambition; nor ever bring yourſelf into compariſon with thoſe maſters of the earth who have already engroſſed the attention of half mankind before you.

Of

Of ſuch mighty importance does it appear to be, in the imaginations of men, to ſtand in that ſituation which ſets them moſt in the view of general ſympathy and attention. And thus, place, that great object which divides the wives of aldermen, is the end of half the labours of human life; and is the cauſe of all the tumult and buſtle, all the rapine and injuſtice, which avarice and ambition have introduced into this world. People of ſenſe, it is ſaid, indeed deſpiſe place; that is, they deſpiſe ſitting at the head of the table, and are indifferent who it is that is pointed out to the company by that frivolous circumſtance, which the ſmalleſt advantage is capable of overbalancing. But rank, diſtinction, preeminence, no man deſpiſes, unleſs he is either raiſed very much above, or ſunk very much below, the ordinary ſtandard of human nature; unleſs he is either ſo confirmed in wiſdom and real philoſophy, as to be ſatisfied that, while the propriety of his conduct renders him the juſt object of approbation, it is of little conſequence though he be neither attended to, nor approved of; or ſo habituated to the idea of his own meanneſs, ſo ſunk in ſlothful and ſottiſh indifference, as entirely to have forgot the deſire, and almoſt the very wiſh, for ſuperiority.

As to become the natural object of the joyous congratulations and ſympathetic attentions of mankind is, in this manner, the circumſtance which gives to proſperity all its dazzling ſplendour; ſo nothing darkens ſo much the gloom of adverſity as to feel that our misfortunes are the objects, not of the fellow-feeling, but of the contempt and averſion of our brethren. It is upon this account that the moſt dreadful calamities are not always thoſe which it is moſt difficult to ſupport. It is often more mortifying to appear in public under ſmall diſaſters, than under great misfortunes. The firſt excite no ſympathy; but the ſecond, though they may excite none that approaches to the anguiſh of the ſufferer, call forth, however, a very lively compaſſion. The ſentiments of the ſpectators are, in this laſt caſe, leſs wide of thoſe of the ſufferer, and their imperfect fellow-feeling lends him ſome aſſiſtance in ſupporting his miſery. Before a gay aſſembly, a gentleman would be more mortified to appear covered with filth and rags than with blood and wounds. This laſt ſituation would intereſt their pity; the other would provoke their laughter. The judge who orders a criminal to be ſet in the pillory, diſhonours him more than if he had condemned him to the ſcaffold.

The great prince who ſome years ago caned a general officer at the head of his army, diſgraced him irrecoverably. The puniſhment would have been much leſs had he ſhot him through the body. By the laws of honour, to ſtrike with a cane diſhonours, to ſtrike with a ſword does not, for an obvious reaſon. Thoſe ſlighter puniſhments, when inflicted on a gentleman, to whom diſhonour is the greateſt of all evils, come to be regarded among a humane and generous people, as the moſt dreadful of any. With regard to perſons of that rank, therefore, they are univerſally laid aſide, and the law, while it takes their life upon many occaſions, reſpects their honour upon almoſt all. To ſcourge a perſon of quality, or to ſet him in the pillory, upon account of any crime whatever, is a brutality of which no European government, except that of Ruſſia, is capable.

A brave man is not rendered contemptible by being brought to the ſcaffold; he is, by being ſet in the pillory. His behaviour in the one ſituation may gain him univerſal eſteem and admiration. No behaviour in the other can render him agreeable. The ſympathy of the ſpectators ſupports him in the one caſe, and ſaves him from that ſhame, that conſciouſneſs, that his miſery is felt by himſelf

ſelf only, which is of all ſentiments the moſt unſupportable. There is no ſympathy in the other; or if there is any, it is not with his pain, which is a trifle, but with his conſciouſneſs of the want of ſympathy with which this pain is attended. It is with his ſhame, not with his ſorrow. Thoſe who pity him, bluſh and hang down their heads for him. He droops in the ſame manner, and feels himſelf irrecoverably degraded by the puniſhment, though not by the crime. The man, on the contrary, who dies with reſolution, as he is naturally regarded with the erect aſpect of eſteem and approbation, ſo he wears himſelf the ſame undaunted countenance; and, if the crime does not deprive him of the reſpect of others, the puniſhment never will. He has no ſuſpicion that his ſituation is the object of contempt or deriſion to any body, and he can, with propriety, aſſume the air, not only of perfect ſerenity, but of triumph and exultation.

"Great dangers," ſays the Cardinal de Retz, "have their charms, becauſe there is "ſome glory to be got, even when we miſ-"carry. But moderate dangers have no-"thing but what is horrible, becauſe the loſs "of reputation always attends the want of "ſucceſs." His maxim has the ſame foundation

ation with what we have been juſt now obſerving with regard to puniſhments.

Human virtue is ſuperior to pain, to poverty, to danger, and to death; nor does it even require its utmoſt efforts to deſpiſe them. But to have its miſery expoſed to inſult and deriſion, to be led in triumph, to be ſet up for the hand of ſcorn to point at, is a ſituation in which its conſtancy is much more apt to fail. Compared with the contempt of mankind, all other external evils are eaſily ſupported.

CHAP. III.

Of the corruption of our moral ſentiments, which is occaſioned by this diſpoſition to admire the rich and the great, and to deſpiſe or neglect perſons of poor and mean condition.

THIS diſpoſition to admire, and almoſt to worſhip the rich and the powerful, and to deſpiſe, or, at leaſt, to neglect perſons of poor and mean condition, though neceſſary both to eſtabliſh and to maintain the diſtinc-

tion of ranks and the order of ſociety, is, at the ſame time, the great and moſt univerſal cauſe of the corruption of our moral ſentiments. That wealth and greatneſs are often regarded with the reſpect and admiration which are due only to wiſdom and virtue; and that the contempt, of which vice and folly are the only proper objects, is often moſt unjuſtly beſtowed upon poverty and weakneſs, has been the complaint of moraliſts in all ages.

We deſire both to be reſpectable, and to be reſpected. We dread both to be contemptible, and to be contemned. But, upon coming into the world, we ſoon find that wiſdom and virtue are by no means the ſole objects of reſpect; nor vice and folly, of contempt. We frequently ſee the reſpectful attentions of the world more ſtrongly directed towards the rich and the great, than towards the wiſe and the virtuous. We ſee frequently the vices and follies of the powerful much leſs deſpiſed than the poverty and weakneſs of the innocent. To deſerve, to acquire, and to enjoy the reſpect and admiration of mankind, are the great objects of ambition and emulation. Two different roads are preſented to us, equally leading to the attainment of this ſo much deſired object; the one, by the ſtudy

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of wiſdom, and the practice of virtue; the other, by the acquiſition of wealth and greatneſs. Two different characters are preſented to our emulation; the one, of proud ambition and oſtentatious avidity; the other, of humble modeſty and equitable juſtice. Two different models, two different pictures, are held out to us, according to which we may faſhion our own character and behaviour; the one more gaudy and glittering in its colouring; the other more correct and more exquiſitely beautiful in its outline; the one forcing itſelf upon the notice of every wandering eye; the other attracting the attention of ſcarce any body but the moſt ſtudious and careful obſerver. They are the wiſe and the virtuous chiefly, a ſelect, though I am afraid, but a ſmall party, who are the real and ſteady admirers of wiſdom and virtue. The great mob of mankind are the admirers and worſhippers, and, what may ſeem more extraordinary, moſt frequently the diſintereſted admirers and worſhippers, of wealth and greatneſs.

The reſpect which we feel for wiſdom and virtue is, no doubt, different from that which we conceive for wealth and greatneſs; and it requires no very nice diſcernment to diſtinguiſh the difference. But, notwithſtanding this

this difference, thoſe ſentiments bear a very conſiderable reſemblance to one another. In ſome particular features they are, no doubt, different, but, in the general air of the countenance, they ſeem to be ſo very nearly the ſame, that inattentive obſervers are very apt to miſtake the one for the other.

In equal degrees of merit there is ſcarce any man who does not reſpect more the rich and the great, than the poor and the humble. With moſt men the preſumption and vanity of the former are much more admired, than the real and ſolid merit of the latter. It is ſcarce agreeable to good morals, or even to good language, perhaps, to ſay, that mere wealth and greatneſs, abſtracted from merit and virtue, deſerve our reſpect. We muſt acknowledge, however, that they almoſt conſtantly obtain it; and they may, therefore, be conſidered as, in ſome reſpects, the natural objects of it. Thoſe exalted ſtations may no doubt, be completely degraded by vice and folly. But the vice and folly muſt be very great, before they can operate this complete degradation. The profligacy of a man of faſhion is looked upon with much leſs contempt and averſion, than that of a man of meaner condition. In the latter, a ſingle tranſgreſſion of the rules of temperance and

propriety

propriety is commonly more reſented, than the conſtant and avowed contempt of them ever is in the former.

In the middling and inferior ſtations of life, the road to virtue and that to fortune, to ſuch fortune, at leaſt, as men in ſuch ſtations can reaſonably expect to acquire, are happily, in moſt caſes very nearly the ſame. In all the middling and inferior profeſſions, real and ſolid profeſſional abilities, joined to prudent, juſt, firm, and temperate conduct, can very ſeldom fail of ſucceſs. Abilities will even ſometimes prevail where the conduct is by no means correct. Either habitual imprudence, however, or injuſtice, or weakneſs, or profligacy, will always cloud, and ſometimes depreſs altogether, the moſt ſplendid profeſſional abilities. Men in the inferior and middling ſtations of life, beſides, can never be great enough to be above the law, which muſt generally overawe them into ſome ſort of reſpect for, at leaſt, the more important rules of juſtice. The ſucceſs of ſuch people, too, almoſt always depends upon the favour and good opinion of their neighbours and equals; and without a tolerably regular conduct theſe can very ſeldom be obtained. The good old proverb, therefore, That honeſty is the beſt policy, holds in ſuch ſituations,

ations, almoſt always perfectly true. In ſuch ſituations, therefore, we may generally expect a conſiderable degree of virtue; and, fortunately for the good morals of ſociety, theſe are the ſituations of by far the greater part of mankind.

In the ſuperior ſtations of life the caſe is unhappily not always the ſame. In the courts of princes, in the drawing rooms of the great, where ſucceſs and preferment depend, not upon the eſteem of intelligent and well-informed equals, but upon the fanciful and fooliſh favour of ignorant, preſumptuous, and proud ſuperiors; flattery and falſehood too often prevail over merit and abilities. In ſuch ſocieties, the abilities to pleaſe are more regarded than the abilities to ſerve. In quiet and peaceable times, when the ſtorm is at a diſtance, the prince, or great man, wiſhes only to be amuſed, and is even apt to fancy that he has ſcarce any occaſion for the ſervice of any body, or that thoſe who amuſe him are ſufficiently able to ſerve him. The external graces, the frivolous accompliſhments of that impertinent and fooliſh thing called a man of faſhion, are commonly more admired than the ſolid and maſculine virtues of a warrior, a ſtateſman, a philoſopher, or a legiſlator. All the great and awful virtues, all the

virtues

virtues which can fit, either for the council, the ſenate, or the field, are, by the inſolent and inſignificant flatterers, who commonly figure the moſt in ſuch corrupted ſocieties, held in the utmoſt contempt and deriſion. When the duke of Sully was called upon by Lewis the Thirteenth, to give his advice in ſome great emergency, he obſerved the favourites and courtiers whiſpering to one another, and ſmiling at his unfaſhionable appearance. "Whenever your majeſty's "father," ſaid the old warrior and ſtateſman, "did me the honour to conſult me, he or-"dered the buffoons of the court to retire "into the antechamber."

It is from our diſpoſition to admire, and conſequently to imitate, the rich and the great, that they are enabled to ſet, or to lead, what is called the faſhion. Their dreſs is the faſhionable dreſs; the language of their converſation, the faſhionable ſtyle; their air and deportment, the faſhionable behaviour. Even their vices and follies are faſhionable; and the greater part of men are proud to imitate and reſemble them in the very qualities which diſhonour and degrade them. Vain men often give themſelves airs of a faſhionable profligacy, which, in their hearts, they do not approve of, and of which, perhaps, they

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are really not guilty. They desire to be praised for what they themselves do not think praise-worthy, and are ashamed of unfashionable virtues which they sometimes practise in secret, and for which they have secretly some degree of real veneration. There are hypocrites of wealth and greatness, as well as of religion and virtue; and a vain man is as apt to pretend to be what he is not, in the one way, as a cunning man is in the other. He assumes the equipage and splendid way of living of his superiors, without considering that whatever may be praise-worthy in any of these, derives its whole merit and propriety from its suitableness to that situation and fortune which both require and can easily support the expence. Many a poor man places his glory in being thought rich, without considering that the duties (if one may call such follies by so very venerable a name) which that reputation imposes upon him, must soon reduce him to beggary, and render his situation still more unlike that of those whom he admires and imitates, than it had been originally.

To attain to this envied situation, the candidates for fortune too frequently abandon the paths of virtue; for unhappily, the road which leads to the one, and that which leads

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to the other, lie ſometimes in very oppoſite directions. But the ambitious man flatters himſelf that, in the ſplendid ſituation to which he advances, he will have ſo many means of commanding the reſpect and admiration of mankind, and will be enabled to act with ſuch ſuperior propriety and grace, that the luſtre of his future conduct will entirely cover, or efface, the foulneſs of the ſteps by which he arrived at that elevation. In many governments the candidates for the higheſt ſtations are above the law; and if they can attain the object of their ambition, they have no fear of being called to account for the means by which they acquired it. They often endeavour, therefore, not only by fraud and falſehood, the ordinary and vulgar arts of intrigue and cabal; but ſometimes by the perpetration of the moſt enormous crimes, by murder and aſſaſſination, by rebellion and civil war, to ſupplant and deſtroy thoſe who oppoſe or ſtand in the way of their greatneſs. They more frequently miſcarry than ſucceed; and commonly gain nothing but the diſgraceful puniſhment which is due to their crimes. But though they ſhould be ſo lucky as to attain that wiſhed-for greatneſs, they are always moſt miſerably diſappointed in the happineſs which they expect to enjoy in it. It is not

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eaſe or pleaſure, but always honour, of one kind or another, though frequently an honour very ill underſtood, that the ambitious man really purſues. But the honour of his exalted ſtation appears, both in his own eyes, and in thoſe of other people, polluted and defiled by the baſeneſs of the means through which he roſe to it. Though by the profuſion of every liberal expence; though by exceſſive indulgence in every profligate pleaſure, the wretched, but uſual, reſource of ruined characters; though by the hurry of public buſineſs, or by the prouder and more dazzling tumult of war, he may endeavour to efface, both from his own memory and from that of other people, the remembrance of what he has done, that remembrance never fails to purſue him. He invokes in vain the dark and diſmal powers of forgetfulneſs and oblivion. He remembers himſelf what he has done, and that remembrance tells him that other people muſt likewiſe remember it. Amidſt all the gawdy pomp of the moſt oſtentatious greatneſs; amidſt the venal and vile adulation of the great and of the learned; amidſt the more innocent, though more fooliſh, acclamations of the common people; amidſt all the pride of conqueſt and the triumph of ſucceſsful war, he is ſtill ſecretly

purſued

purſued by the avenging furies of ſhame and remorſe; and, while glory ſeems to ſurround him on all ſides, he himſelf, in his own imagination, ſees black and foul infamy faſt purſuing him, and every moment ready to overtake him from behind. Even the great Cæſar, though he had the magnanimity to diſmiſs his guards, could not diſmiſs his ſuſpicions. The remembrance of Pharſalia ſtill haunted and purſued him. When, at the requeſt of the Senate, he had the generoſity to pardon Marcellus, he told that aſſembly, that he was not unaware of the deſigns which were carrying on againſt his life; but that as he had lived long enough both for nature and for glory, he was contented to die, and therefore deſpiſed all conſpiracies. He had, perhaps, lived long enough for nature. But the man who felt himſelf the object of ſuch deadly reſentment, from thoſe whoſe favour he wiſhed to gain, and whom he ſtill wiſhed to conſider as his friends, had certainly lived too long for real glory; or for all the happineſs which he could ever hope to enjoy in the love and eſteem of his equals.

THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART II.

Of MERIT and DEMERIT; or, of the Objects of REWARD and PUNISHMENT.

Conſiſting of Three Sections.

SECTION I.

Of the SENSE of MERIT and DEMERIT.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is another ſet of qualities aſcribed to the actions and conduct of mankind, diſtinct from their propriety or impropriety, their decency or ungracefulneſs, and which are the objects of a diſtinct ſpecies of approbation and diſapprobation. Theſe are, Merit and Demerit, the qualities of deſerving reward, and of deſerving puniſhment.

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It has already been obſerved, that the ſentiment or affection of the heart, from which any action proceeds, and upon which its whole virtue or vice depends, may be conſidered under two different aſpects, or in two different relations: firſt, in relation to the cauſe or object which excites it; and, ſecondly, in relation to the end which it propoſes, or to the effect which it tends to produce: that upon the ſuitableneſs or unſuitableneſs, upon the proportion or diſproportion which the affection ſeems to bear to the cauſe or object which excites it, depends the propriety or impropriety, the decency or ungracefulneſs of the conſequent action, and that upon the beneficial or hurtful effects which the affection propoſes or tends to produce, depends the merit or demerit, the good or ill deſert of the action, to which it gives occaſion. Wherein conſiſts our ſenſe of the propriety or impropriety of actions, has been explained in the former part of this diſcourſe. We come now to conſider, wherein conſiſts that of their good or ill deſert.

CHAP. I.

That whatever appears to be the proper object of gratitude, appears to deserve reward; and that, in the same manner, whatever appears to be the proper object of resentment, appears to deserve punishment.

TO us, therefore that action must appear to deserve reward, which appears to be the proper and approved object of that sentiment, which most immediately and directly prompts us to reward, or to do good to another. And in the same manner, that action must appear to deserve punishment, which appears to be the proper and approved object of that sentiment which most immediately and directly prompts us to punish, or to inflict evil upon another.

The sentiment which most immediately and directly prompts us to reward, is gratitude; that which most immediately and directly prompts us to punish, is resentment.

To us, therefore, that action must appear to deserve reward, which appears to be the proper and approved object of gratitude; as,

on the other hand, that action must appear to deserve punishment, which appears to be the proper and approved object of resentment.

To reward is to recompence, to remunerate, to return good for good received. To punish, too, is to recompence, to remunerate, though in a different manner; it is to return evil for evil that has been done.

There are some other passions, besides gratitude and resentment, which interest us in the happiness or misery of others; but there are none which so directly excite us to be the instruments of either. The love and esteem which grow upon acquaintance and habitual approbation, necessarily lead us to be pleased with the good fortune of the man who is the object of such agreeable emotions, and consequently, to be willing to lend a hand to promote it. Our love, however is fully satisfied though his good fortune should be brought about without our assistance. All that this passion desires is to see him happy, without regarding who was the author of his prosperity. But gratitude is not to be satisfied in this manner. If the person to whom we owe many obligations is made happy without our assistance, though it pleases our love, it does not content our gratitude. Till we have recompensed him, till we ourselves have been

inſtrumental in promoting his happineſs, we feel ourſelves ſtill loaded with that debt which his paſt ſervices have laid upon us.

The hatred and diſlike, in the ſame manner, which grow upon habitual diſapprobation, would often lead us to take a malicious pleaſure in the misfortune of the man whoſe conduct and character excite ſo painful a paſſion. But though diſlike and hatred harden us againſt all ſympathy, and ſometimes diſpoſe us even to rejoice at the diſtreſs of another, yet, if there is no reſentment in the caſe, if neither we nor our friends have received any great perſonal provocation, theſe paſſions would not naturally lead us to wiſh to be inſtrumental in bringing it about. Though we could fear no puniſhment in conſequence of our having had ſome hand in it, we would rather that it ſhould happen by other means. To one under the dominion of violent hatred, it would be agreeable perhaps to hear, that the perſon whom he abhorred and deteſted was killed by ſome accident. But if he had the leaſt ſpark of juſtice, which, though his paſſion is not very favourable to virtue, he might ſtill have, it would hurt him exceſſively to have been himſelf, even without deſign, the occaſion of this misfortune. Much more would the very thought

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of voluntarily contributing to it ſhock him beyond all meaſure. He would reject with horror even the imagination of ſo execrable a deſign; and if he could imagine himſelf capable of ſuch an enormity, he would begin to regard himſelf in the ſame odious light in which he had conſidered the perſon who was the object of his diſlike. But it is quite otherwiſe with reſentment: if the perſon who had done us ſome great injury, who had murdered our father or our brother, for example, ſhould ſoon afterwards die of a fever, or even be brought to the ſcaffold upon account of ſome other crime, though it might ſoothe our hatred, it would not fully gratify our reſentment. Reſentment would prompt us to deſire, not only that he ſhould be puniſhed, but that he ſhould be puniſhed by our means, and upon account of that particular injury which he had done to us. Reſentment cannot be fully gratified unleſs the offender is not only made to grieve in his turn, but to grieve for that particular wrong which we have ſuffered from him. He muſt be made to repent and be ſorry for this very action, that others, through fear of the like puniſhment, may be terrified from being guilty of the like offence. The natural gratification of this paſſion tends, of its own ac-

cord, to produce all the political ends of punishment; the correction of the criminal, and the example to the public.

Gratitude and resentment, therefore, are the sentiments which most immediately and directly prompt to reward and to punish. To us, therefore, he must appear to deserve reward, who appears to be the proper and approved object of gratitude; and he to deserve punishment, who appears to be that of resentment.

CHAP. II.

Of the proper objects of gratitude and resentment.

To be the proper and approved object either of gratitude or resentment, can mean nothing but to be the object of that gratitude, and of that resentment which naturally seems proper and is approved of.

But these, as well as all the other passions of human nature, seem proper and are approved of, when the heart of every impartial spectator entirely sympathizes with them, when

when every indifferent by-ſtander entirely enters into, and goes along with them.

He, therefore, appears to deſerve reward, who, to ſome perſon or perſons, is the natural object of a gratitude which every human heart is diſpoſed to beat time to, and thereby applaud: and he, on the other hand, appears to deſerve puniſhment, who in the ſame manner is to ſome perſon or perſons the natural object of a reſentment which the breaſt of every reaſonable man is ready to adopt and ſympathize with. To us, ſurely, that action muſt appear to deſerve reward which every body who knows of it would wiſh to reward, and therefore delights to ſee rewarded: and that action muſt as ſurely appear to deſerve puniſhment which every body who hears of it is angry with, and upon that account rejoices to ſee puniſhed.

1. As we ſympathize with the joy of our companions when in proſperity, ſo we join with them in the complacency and ſatisfaction with which they naturally regard whatever is the cauſe of their good fortune. We enter into the love and affection which they conceive for it, and begin to love it too. We ſhould be ſorry for their ſakes if it was deſtroyed, or even if it was placed at too great a diſtance from them, and out of the reach

reach of their care and protection, though they ſhould loſe nothing by its abſence except the pleaſure of ſeeing it. If it is man who has thus been the fortunate inſtrument of the happineſs of his brethren, this is ſtill more peculiarly the caſe. When we ſee one man aſſiſted, protected, relieved by another, our ſympathy with the joy of the perſon who receives the benefit ſerves only to animate our fellow-feeling with his gratitude towards him who beſtows it. When we look upon the perſon who is the cauſe of his pleaſure with the eyes with which we imagine he muſt look upon him, his benefactor ſeems to ſtand before us in the moſt engaging and amiable light. We readily therefore ſympathize with the grateful affection which he conceives for a perſon to whom he has been ſo much obliged; and conſequently applaud the returns which he is diſpoſed to make for the good offices conferred upon him. As we entirely enter into the affection from which theſe returns proceed, they neceſſarily ſeem every way proper and ſuitable to their object.

2. In the ſame manner, as we ſympathize with the ſorrow of our fellow-creature when ever we ſee his diſtreſs, ſo we likewiſe enter into his abhorrence and averſion for whatever has given

given occaſion to it. Our heart, as it adopts and beats time to his grief, ſo it is likewiſe animated with that ſpirit by which he endeavours to drive away or deſtroy the cauſe of it. The indolent and paſſive fellow-feeling by which we accompany him in his ſufferings, readily gives way to that more vigorous and active ſentiment by which we go along with him in the effort he makes, either to repel them, or to gratify his averſion to what has given occaſion to them. This is ſtill more peculiarly the caſe, when it is man who has cauſed them. When we ſee one man oppreſſed or injured by another, the ſympathy which we feel with the diſtreſs of the ſufferer ſeems to ſerve only to animate our fellow-feeling with his reſentment againſt the offender. We are rejoiced to ſee him attack his adverſary in his turn, and are eager and ready to aſſiſt him whenever he exerts himſelf for defence, or even for vengeance within a certain degree. If the injured ſhould periſh in the quarrel, we not only ſympathize with the real reſentment of his friends and relations, but with the imaginary reſentment which in fancy we lend to the dead, who is no longer capable of feeling or any other human ſentiment. But as we put ourſelves in his ſituation, as we enter, as it were, into his body,

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and in our imaginations, in ſome meaſure, animate anew the deformed and mangled carcaſe of the ſlain, when we bring home in this manner his caſe to our own boſoms, we feel, upon this, as upon many other occaſions, an emotion which the perſon principally concerned is incapable of feeling, and which yet we feel by an illuſive ſympathy with him. The ſympathetic tears which we ſhed for that immenſe and irretrievable loſs, which in our fancy he appears to have ſuſtained, ſeem to be but a ſmall part of the duty which we owe him. The injury which he has ſuffered demands, we think, a principal part of our attention. We feel that reſentment which we imagine he ought to feel, and which he would feel if in his cold and lifeleſs body there remained any conſciouſneſs of what paſſes upon earth. His blood, we think, calls aloud for vengeance. The very aſhes of the dead ſeem to be diſturbed at the thought that his injuries are to paſs unrevenged. The horrors which are ſuppoſed to haunt the bed of the murderer, the ghoſts which ſuperſtition imagines riſe from their graves to demand vengeance upon thoſe who brought them to an untimely end, all take their origin from this natural ſympathy with the imaginary reſentment of the ſlain. And

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with regard at leaſt, to this moſt dreadful of all crimes, Nature, antecedent to all reflections upon the utility of puniſhment, has in this manner ſtamped upon the human heart, in the ſtrongeſt and moſt indelible characters, an immediate and inſtinctive approbation of the ſacred and neceſſary law of retaliation.

CHAP. III.

That where there is no approbation of the conduct of the perſon who confers the benefit, there is little ſympathy with the gratitude of him who receives it: and that, on the contrary, where there is no diſapprobation of the motives of the perſon who does the miſchief, there is no ſort of ſympathy with the reſentment of him who ſuffers it.

IT is to be obſerved, however, that, how beneficial ſoever on the one hand, or how hurtful ſoever on the other, the actions or intentions of the perſon who acts may have been to the perſon who is, if I may ſay ſo, acted upon, yet if in the one caſe there appears to have been no propriety in the motives

tives of the agent, if we cannot enter into the affections which influenced his conduct, we have little ſympathy with the gratitude of the perſon who receives the benefit: or if, in the other caſe, there appears to have been no impropriety in the motives of the agent, if, on the contrary, the affections which influenced his conduct are ſuch as we muſt neceſſarily enter into, we can have no ſort of ſympathy with the reſentment of the perſon who ſuffers. Little gratitude ſeems due in the one caſe, and all ſort of reſentment ſeems unjuſt in the other. The one action ſeems to merit little reward, the other to deſerve no puniſhment.

1. Firſt, I ſay, That wherever we cannot ſympathize with the affections of the agent, wherever there ſeems to be no propriety in the motives which influenced his conduct, we are leſs diſpoſed to enter into the gratitude of the perſon who received the benefit of his actions. A very ſmall return ſeems due to that fooliſh and profuſe generoſity which confers the greateſt benefits from the moſt trivial motives, and gives an eſtate to a man merely becauſe his name and ſirname happen to be the ſame with thoſe of the giver. Such ſervices do not ſeem to demand any proportionable recompence. Our contempt for the folly

folly of the agent hinders us from thoroughly entering into the gratitude of the perſon to whom the good office has been done. His benefactor ſeems unworthy of it. As when we place ourſelves in the ſituation of the perſon obliged, we feel that we could conceive no great reverence for ſuch a benefactor, we eaſily abſolve him from a great deal of that ſubmiſſive veneration and eſteem which we ſhould think due to a more reſpectable character; and provided he always treats his weak friend with kindneſs and humanity, we are willing to excuſe him from many attentions and regards which we ſhould demand to a worthier patron. Thoſe Princes, who have heaped, with the greateſt profuſion, wealth, power, and honours, upon their favourites, have ſeldom excited that degree of attachment to their perſons which has often been experienced by thoſe who were more frugal of their favours. The well-natured, but injudicious prodigality of James the Firſt of Great Britain ſeems to have attached nobody to his perſon; and that Prince, notwithſtanding his ſocial and harmleſs diſpoſition, appears to have lived and died without a friend. The whole gentry and nobility of England expoſed their lives and fortunes in the cauſe of his more frugal and diſtinguiſh-

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ing ſon, notwithſtanding the coldneſs and diſtant ſeverity of his ordinary deportment.

2. Secondly, I ſay, That wherever the conduct of the agent appears to have been entirely directed by motives and affections which we thoroughly enter into and approve of, we can have no ſort of ſympathy with the reſentment of the ſufferer, how great ſoever the miſchief which may have been done to him. When two people quarrel, if we take part with, and entirely adopt the reſentment of one of them, it is impoſſible that we ſhould enter into that of the other. Our ſympathy with the perſon whoſe motives we go along with, and whom therefore we look upon as in the right, cannot but harden us againſt all fellow-feeling with the other, whom we neceſſarily regard as in the wrong. Whatever this laſt, therefore, may have ſuffered, while it is no more than what we ourſelves ſhould have wiſhed him to ſuffer, while it is no more than what our own ſympathetic indignation would have prompted us to inflict upon him, it cannot either diſpleaſe or provoke us. When an inhuman murderer is brought to the ſcaffold, though we have ſome compaſſion for his miſery, we can have no ſort of fellow-feeling with his reſentment, if he ſhould be ſo abſurd as to expreſs any againſt

againſt either his proſecutor or his judge. The natural tendency of their juſt indignation againſt ſo vile a criminal is indeed the moſt fatal and ruinous to him. But it is impoſſible that we ſhould be diſpleaſed with the tendency of a ſentiment, which, when we bring the caſe home to ourſelves, we feel that we cannot avoid adopting.

CHAP. IV.

Recapitulation of the foregoing chapters.

1. WE do not, therefore, thoroughly and heartily ſympathize with the gratitude of one man towards another, merely becauſe this other has been the cauſe of his good fortune, unleſs he has been the cauſe of it from motives which we entirely go along with. Our heart muſt adopt the principles of the agent, and go along with all the affections which influenced his conduct, before it can entirely ſympathize with, and beat time to, the gratitude of the perſon who has been benefited by his actions. If in the conduct of the benefactor there appears to

have been no propriety, how beneficial ſoever its effects, it does not ſeem to demand, or neceſſarily to require any proportionable recompenſe.

But when to the beneficent tendency of the action is joined the propriety of the affection from which it proceeds, when we entirely ſympathize and go along with the motives of the agent, the love which we conceive for him upon his own account, enhances and enlivens our fellow-feeling with the gratitude of thoſe who owe their proſperity to his good conduct. His actions ſeem then to demand, and, if I may ſay ſo, to call aloud for a proportionable recompenſe. We then entirely enter into that gratitude which prompts to beſtow it. The benefactor ſeems then to be the proper object of reward, when we thus entirely ſympathize with, and approve of, that ſentiment which prompts to reward him. When we approve of, and go along with, the affection from which the action proceeds, we muſt neceſſarily approve of the action, and regard the perſon towards whom it is directed as its proper and ſuitable object.

2. In the ſame manner, we cannot at all ſympathize with the reſentment of one man againſt another, merely becauſe this other has been

been the cauſe of his misfortune, unleſs he has been the cauſe of it from motives which we cannot enter into. Before we can adopt the reſentment of the ſufferer, we muſt diſapprove of the motives of the agent, and feel that our heart renounces all ſympathy with the affections which influenced his conduct. If there appears to have been no impropriety in theſe, how fatal ſoever the tendency of the action which proceeds from them to thoſe againſt whom it is directed, it does not ſeem to deſerve any puniſhment, or to be the proper object of any reſentment.

But when to the hurtfulneſs of the action is joined the impropriety of the affection from whence it proceeds, when our heart rejects with abhorrence all fellow-feeling with the motives of the agent, we then heartily and entirely ſympathize with the reſentment of the ſufferer. Such actions ſeem then to deſerve, and, if I may ſay ſo, to call aloud for, a proportionable puniſhment; and we entirely enter into, and thereby approve of, that reſentment which prompts to inflict it. The offender neceſſarily ſeems then to be the proper object of puniſhment, when we thus entirely ſympathize with, and thereby approve of, that ſentiment which prompts to puniſh. In this caſe too, when we approve, and go

along with, the affection from which the action proceeds, we muſt neceſſarily approve of the action, and regard the perſon againſt whom it is directed, as its proper and ſuitable object.

CHAP. V.

The analyſis of the ſenſe of Merit and Demerit.

1. As our ſenſe, therefore, of the propriety of conduct ariſes from what I ſhall call a direct ſympathy with the affections and motives of the perſon who acts, ſo our ſenſe of its merit ariſes from what I ſhall call an indirect ſympathy with the gratitude of the perſon who is, if I may ſay ſo, acted upon.

As we cannot indeed enter thoroughly into the gratitude of the perſon who receives the benefit, unleſs we beforehand approve of the motives of the benefactor, ſo, upon this account, the ſenſe of merit ſeems to be a compounded ſentiment, and to be made up of two diſtinct emotions; a direct ſympathy with the ſentiments of the agent, and an indirect ſympathy

ſympathy with the gratitude of thoſe who receive the benefit of his actions.

We may, upon many different occaſions, plainly diſtinguiſh thoſe two different emotions combining and uniting together in our ſenſe of the good deſert of a particular character or action. When we read in hiſtory concerning actions of proper and beneficent greatneſs of mind, how eagerly do we enter into ſuch deſigns? How much are we animated by that high-ſpirited generoſity which directs them? How keen are we for their ſucceſs? How grieved at their diſappointment? In imagination we become the very perſon whoſe actions are repreſented to us: we tranſport ourſelves in fancy to the ſcenes of thoſe diſtant and forgotten adventures, and imagine ourſelves acting the part of a Scipio or a Camillus, a Timoleon or an Ariſtides. So far our ſentiments are founded upon the direct ſympathy with the perſon who acts. Nor is the indirect ſympathy with thoſe who receive the benefit of ſuch actions leſs ſenſibly felt. Whenever we place ourſelves in the ſituation of theſe laſt, with what warm and affectionate fellow-feeling do we enter into their gratitude towards thoſe who ſerved them ſo eſſentially? We embrace, as it were, their benefactor along with them. Our heart

readily ſympathizes with the higheſt tranſports of their grateful affection. No honours, no rewards, we think, can be too great for them to beſtow upon him. When they make this proper return for his ſervices, we heartily applaud and go along with them; but are ſhocked beyond all meaſure, if by their conduct they appear to have little ſenſe of the obligations conferred upon them. Our whole ſenſe, in ſhort, of the merit and good deſert of ſuch actions, of the propriety and fitneſs of recompenſing them, and making the perſon who performed them rejoice in his turn, ariſes from the ſympathetic emotions of gratitude and love, with which, when we bring home to our own breaſt the ſituation of thoſe principally concerned, we feel ourſelves naturally tranſported towards the man who could act with ſuch proper and noble beneficence.

2. In the ſame manner, as our ſenſe of the impropriety of conduct ariſes from a want of ſympathy, or from a direct antipathy to the affections and motives of the agent, ſo our ſenſe of its demerit ariſes from what I ſhall here too call an indirect ſympathy with the reſentment of the ſufferer.

As we cannot indeed enter into the reſentment of the ſufferer, unleſs our heart before-

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hand disapproves the motives of the agent, and renounces all fellow-feeling with them; so upon this account the sense of demerit, as well as that of merit, seems to be a compounded sentiment, and to be made up of two distinct emotions; a direct antipathy to the sentiments of the agent, and an indirect sympathy with the resentment of the sufferer.

We may here too, upon many different occasions, plainly distinguish those two different emotions combining and uniting together in our sense of the ill desert of a particular character or action. When we read in history concerning the perfidy and cruelty of a Borgia or a Nero, our heart rises up against the detestable sentiments which influenced their conduct, and renounces with horror and abomination all fellow-feeling with such execrable motives. So far our sentiments are founded upon the direct antipathy to the affections of the agent: and the indirect sympathy with the resentment of the sufferers is still more sensibly felt. When we bring home to ourselves the situation of the persons whom those scourges of mankind insulted, murdered, or betrayed, what indignation do we not feel against such insolent and inhuman oppressors of the earth? Our sympathy with the unavoidable distress of the innocent sufferers is

not more real nor more lively than our fellow-feeling with their juſt and natural reſentment. The former ſentiment only heightens the latter, and the idea of their diſtreſs ſerves only to inflame and blow up our animoſity againſt thoſe who occaſioned it. When we think of the anguiſh of the ſufferers, we take part with them more earneſtly againſt their oppreſſors; we enter with more eagerneſs into all their ſchemes of vengeance, and feel ourſelves every moment wreaking, in imagination, upon ſuch violators of the laws of ſociety, that puniſhment which our ſympathetic indignation tells us is due to their crimes. Our ſenſe of the horror and dreadful atrocity of ſuch conduct, the delight which we take in hearing that it was properly puniſhed, the indignation which we feel when it eſcapes this due retaliation, our whole ſenſe and feeling, in ſhort, of its ill deſert, of the propriety and fitneſs of inflicting evil upon the perſon who is guilty of it, and of making him grieve in his turn, ariſes from the ſympathetic indignation which naturally boils up in the breaſt of the ſpectator, whenever he thoroughly brings home to himſelf the caſe of the ſufferer *.

* To aſcribe in this manner our natural ſenſe of the ill deſert of human actions to a ſympathy with the reſentment of the ſufferer,

ſufferer, may ſeem, to the greater part of people, to be a degradation of that ſentiment. Reſentment is commonly regarded as ſo odious a paſſion, that they will be apt to think it impoſſible that ſo laudable a principle, as the ſenſe of the ill deſert of vice, ſhould in any reſpect be founded upon it. They will be more willing, perhaps, to admit that our ſenſe of the merit of good actions is founded upon a ſympathy with the gratitude of the perſons who receive the benefit of them; becauſe gratitude, as well as all the other benevolent paſſions, is regarded as an amiable principle, which can take nothing from the worth of whatever is founded upon it. Gratitude and reſentment, however, are, in every reſpect, it is evident, counterparts to one another; and if our ſenſe of merit ariſes from a ſympathy with the one, our ſenſe of demerit can ſcarce miſs to proceed from a fellow feeling with the other.

Let it be conſidered too that reſentment, though, in the degrees in which we too often ſee it, the moſt odious, perhaps, of all the paſſions, is not diſapproved of when properly humbled and entirely brought down to the level of the ſympathetic indignation of the ſpectator. When we, who are the byſtanders, feel that our own animoſity entirely correſponds with that of the ſufferer, when the reſentment of this laſt does not in any reſpect go beyond our own, when no word, no geſture eſcapes him that denotes an emotion more violent than what we can keep time to, and when he never aims at inflicting any puniſhment beyond what we ſhould rejoice to ſee inflicted, or what we ourſelves would upon this account even deſire to be the inſtruments of inflicting, it is impoſſible that we ſhould not entirely approve of his ſentiments. Our own emotion in this caſe muſt, in our eyes, undoubtedly juſtify his. And as experience teaches us how much the greater part of mankind are incapable of this moderation, and how great an effort muſt be made in order to bring down the rude and undiſciplined impulſe of reſentment to this ſuitable temper, we cannot avoid conceiving a conſiderable degree of eſteem and admiration for one who appears capable of exerting ſo much ſelf-command over one of the moſt ungovernable paſſions of his nature. When indeed the animoſity of the ſufferer exceeds as it almoſt always does, what we can go along with, as we cannot

cannot enter into it, we neceſſarily diſapprove of it. We even diſapprove of it more than we ſhould of an equal exceſs of almoſt any other paſſion derived from the imagination. And this too violent reſentment, inſtead of carrying us along with it, becomes itſelf the object of our reſentment and indignation. We enter into the oppoſite reſentment of the perſon who is the object of this unjuſt emotion, and who is in danger of ſuffering from it. Revenge, therefore, the exceſs of reſentment, appears to be the moſt deteſtable of all the paſſions, and is the object of the horror and indignation of every body. And as in the way in which this paſſion commonly diſcovers itſelf among mankind, it is exceſſive a hundred times for once that it is moderate, we are very apt to conſider it as altogether odious and deteſtable, becauſe in its moſt ordinary appearances it is ſo. Nature, however, even in the preſent depraved ſtate of mankind, does not ſeem to have dealt ſo unkindly with us, as to have endowed us with any principle which is wholly and in every reſpect evil, or which, in no degree, and in no direction, can be the proper object of praiſe and approbation. Upon ſome occaſions we are ſenſible that this paſſion which is generally too ſtrong, may likewiſe be too weak. We ſometimes complain that a particular perſon ſhows too little ſpirit, and has too little ſenſe of the injuries that have been done to him; and we are as ready to deſpiſe him for the defect, as to hate him for the exceſs of this paſſion.

The inſpired writers would not ſurely have talked ſo frequently or ſo ſtrongly of the wrath and anger of God, if they had regarded every degree of thoſe paſſions as vicious and evil, even in ſo weak and imperfect a creature as man.

Let it be conſidered too, that the preſent inquiry is not concerning a matter of right, if I may ſay ſo, but concerning a matter of fact. We are not at preſent examining upon what principles a perfect being would approve of the puniſhment of bad actions; but upon what principles ſo weak and imperfect a creature as man actually and in fact approves of it. The principles which I have juſt now mentioned, it is evident, have a very great effect upon his ſentiments; and it ſeems wiſely ordered that it ſhould be ſo. The very exiſtence

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of ſociety requires that unmerited and unprovoked malice ſhould be reſtrained by proper puniſhments; and conſequently, that to inflict thoſe puniſhments ſhould be regarded as a proper and laudable action. Though man, therefore be naturally endowed with a deſire of the welfare and preſervation of ſociety, yet the Author of Nature has not entruſted it to his reaſon to find out that a certain application of puniſhments is the proper means of attaining this end; but has endowed him with an immediate and inſtinctive approbation of that very application which is moſt proper to attain it. The œconomy of Nature is in this reſpect exactly of a piece with what it is upon many other occaſions. With regard to all thoſe ends which, upon account of their peculiar importance, may be regarded, if ſuch an expreſſion is allowable, as the favourite ends of Nature, ſhe has conſtantly in this manner not only endowed mankind with an appetite for the end which ſhe propoſes, but likewiſe with an appetite for the means by which alone this end can be brought about, for their own ſakes and independent of their tendency to produce it. Thus ſelf-preſervation and the propagation of the ſpecies are the great ends which Nature ſeems to have propoſed in the formation of all animals. Mankind are endowed with a deſire of thoſe ends, and an averſion to the contrary; with a love of life, and a dread of diſſolution; with a deſire of the continuance and perpetuity of the ſpecies, and with an averſion to the thoughts of its entire extinction. But though we are in this manner endowed with a very ſtrong deſire of thoſe ends, it has not been intruſted to the ſlow and uncertain determinations of our reaſon, to find out the proper means of bringing them about. Nature has directed us to the greater part of theſe by original and immediate inſtincts. Hunger, thirſt, the paſſion which unites the two ſexes, the love of pleaſure and the dread of pain, prompt us to apply thoſe means for their own ſakes, and without any conſideration of their tendency to thoſe beneficent ends which the great Director of nature intended to produce by them.

Before I conclude this note, I muſt take notice of a difference between the approbation of propriety and that of merit or beneficence. Before we approve of the ſentiments of any perſon

perſon as proper and ſuitable to their objects, we muſt not only be affected in the ſame manner as he is, but we muſt perceive this harmony and correſpondence of ſentiments between him and ourſelves. Thus, though upon hearing of a misfortune that had befallen my friend, I ſhould conceive preciſely that degree of concern which he gives way to; yet till I am informed of the manner in which he behaves, till I perceive the harmony between his emotions and mine, I cannot be ſaid to approve of the ſentiments which influence his behaviour. The approbation of propriety therefore requires not only that we ſhould entirely ſympathize with the perſon who acts, but that we ſhould perceive this perfect concord between his ſentiments and our own. On the contrary when I hear of a benefit that has been beſtowed upon another perſon, let him who has received it be affected in what manner he pleaſes, if by bringing his caſe home to myſelf, I feel gratitude ariſe in my own breaſt, I neceſſarily approve of the conduct of his benefactor, and regard it as meritorious, and the proper object of reward. Whether the perſon who has received the benefit conceives gratitude or not, cannot, it is evident, in any degree alter our ſentiments with regard to the merit of him who has beſtowed it. No actual correſpondence of ſentiments, therefore, is here required. It is ſufficient that if he was grateful they would correſpond; and our ſenſe of merit is often founded upon one of thoſe illuſive ſympathies, by which, when we bring home to ourſelves the caſe of another, we are often affected in a manner in which the perſon principally concerned is incapable of being affected. There is a ſimilar difference between our diſapprobation of demerit, and that of impropriety.

SECTION II.

Of Juſtice and Beneficence.

CHAP. I.

Compariſon of thoſe two virtues.

ACTIONS of a beneficent tendency, which proceed from proper motives, ſeem alone to require a reward; becauſe ſuch alone are the approved objects of gratitude, or excite the ſympathetic gratitude of the ſpectator.

Actions of a hurtful tendency, which proceed from improper motives, ſeem alone to deſerve puniſhment; becauſe ſuch alone are the approved objects of reſentment, or excite the ſympathetic reſentment of the ſpectator.

Beneficence is always free; it cannot be extorted by force, the mere want of it expoſes to no puniſhment; becauſe the mere want of beneficence tends to do no real poſitive evil. It may diſappoint of the good which might reaſonably have been expected, and upon that account it may juſtly excite

diſlike and diſapprobation: it cannot, however, provoke any reſentment which mankind will go along with. The man who does not recompenſe his benefactor, when he has it in his power, and when his benefactor needs his aſſiſtance, is, no doubt, guilty of the blackeſt ingratitude. The heart of every impartial ſpectator rejects all fellow-feeling with the ſelfiſhneſs of his motives, and he is the proper object of the higheſt diſapprobation. But ſtill he does no poſitive hurt to any body. He only does not do that good which in propriety he ought to have done. He is the object of hatred, a paſſion which is naturally excited by impropriety of ſentiment and behaviour; not of reſentment, a paſſion which is never properly called forth but by actions which tend to do real and poſitive hurt to ſome particular perſons. His want of gratitude therefore cannot be puniſhed. To oblige him by force to perform what in gratitude he ought to perform, and what every impartial ſpectator would approve of him for performing, would, if poſſible, be ſtill more improper than his neglecting to perform it. His benefactor would diſhonour himſelf if he attempted by violence to conſtrain him to gratitude, and it would be impertinent for any third perſon, who was not

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the ſuperior of either to intermeddle. But of all the duties of beneficence, thoſe which gratitude recommends to us approach neareſt to what is called a perfect and complete obligation. What friendſhip, what generoſity, what charity, would prompt us to do with univerſal approbation, is ſtill more free, and can ſtill leſs be extorted by force than the duties of gratitude. We talk of the debt of gratitude, not of charity, or generoſity, nor even of friendſhip, when friendſhip is mere eſteem, and has not been enhanced and complicated with gratitude for good offices.

Reſentment ſeems to have been given us by nature for defence, and for defence only. It is the ſafeguard of juſtice and the ſecurity of innocence. It prompts us to beat off the miſchief which is attempted to be done to us, and to retaliate that which is already done; that the offender may be made to repent of his injuſtice, and that others, through fear of the like puniſhment, may be terrified from being guilty of the like offence. It muſt be reſerved therefore for theſe purpoſes, nor can the ſpectator ever go along with it when it is exerted for any other. But the mere want of the beneficent virtues, though it may diſappoint us of the good which might reaſonably be expected, neither does, nor attempts

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to do, any mischief from which we can have occasion to defend themselves.

There is however another virtue, of which the observance is not left to the freedom of our own wills, which may be extorted by force, and of which the violation exposes to resentment, and consequently to punishment. This virtue is justice: the violation of justice is injury: it does real and positive hurt to some particular persons, from motives which are naturally disapproved of. It is, therefore, the proper object of resentment, and of punishment, which is the natural consequence of resentment. As mankind go along with, and approve of, the violence employed to avenge the hurt which is done by injustice, so they much more go along with, and approve of that which is employed to prevent and beat off the injury, and to restrain the offender from hurting his neighbours. The person himself who meditates an injustice is sensible of this, and feels that force may, with the utmost propriety, be made use of, both by the person whom he is about to injure, and by others, either to obstruct the execution of his crime, or to punish him when he has executed it. And upon this is founded that remarkable distinction between justice and all the other social virtues, which has of late

late been particularly inſiſted upon by an author of very great and original genius, that we feel ourſelves to be under a ſtricter obligation to act according to juſtice, than agreeably to friendſhip, charity, or generoſity; that the practice of theſe laſt mentioned virtues ſeems to be left in ſome meaſure to our own choice, but that, ſomehow or other, we feel ourſelves to be in a peculiar manner tied, bound, and obliged to the obſervation of juſtice. We feel, that is to ſay, that force may, with the utmoſt propriety, and with the approbation of all mankind, be made uſe of to conſtrain us to obſerve the rules of the one, but not to follow the precepts of the other.

We muſt always, however, carefully diſtinguiſh what is only blamable, or the proper object of diſapprobation, from what force may be employed either to puniſh or to prevent. That ſeems blamable which falls ſhort of that ordinary degree of proper beneficence which experience teaches us to expect of every body; and on the contrary, that ſeems praiſe-worthy which goes beyond it. The ordinary degree itſelf ſeems neither blamable nor praiſe-worthy. A father, a ſon, a brother, who behaves to the correſpondent relation neither better nor worſe than the greater

part of men commonly do, ſeems properly to deſerve neither praiſe nor blame. He who ſurpriſes us by extraordinary and unexpected, though ſtill proper and ſuitable kindneſs, or on the contrary by extraordinary and unexpected, as well as unſuitable unkindneſs, ſeems praiſe-worthy in the one caſe, and blamable in the other.

Even the moſt ordinary degree of kindneſs or beneficence, however, cannot, among equals, be extorted by force. Among equals each individual is naturally, and antecedent to the inſtitution of civil government, regarded as having a right both to defend himſelf from injuries, and to exact a certain degree of puniſhment for thoſe which have been done to him. Every generous ſpectator not only approves of his conduct when he does this, but enters ſo far into his ſentiments as often to be willing to aſſiſt him. When one man attacks, or robs, or attempts to murder another, all the neighbours take the alarm, and think that they do right when they run, either to revenge the perſon who has been injured, or to defend him who is in danger of being ſo. But when a father fails in the ordinary degree of parental affection towards a ſon; when a ſon ſeems to want that filial reverence which might be expected to his father;

father; when brothers are without the usual degree of brotherly affection; when a man shuts his breast against compassion, and refuses to relieve the misery of his fellow-creatures, when he can with the greatest ease; in all these cases, though every body blames the conduct, nobody imagines that those who might have reason, perhaps, to expect more kindness, have any right to extort it by force. The sufferer can only complain, and the spectator can intermeddle no other way than by advice and persuasion. Upon all such occasions, for equals to use force against one another, would be thought the highest degree of insolence and presumption.

A superior may, indeed, sometimes, with universal approbation, oblige those under his jurisdiction to behave, in this respect, with a certain degree of propriety to one another. The laws of all civilized nations oblige parents to maintain their children, and children to maintain their parents, and impose upon men many other duties of beneficence. The civil magistrate is entrusted with the power not only of preserving the public peace by restraining injustice, but of promoting the prosperity of the commonwealth, by establishing good discipline, and by discouraging every sort of vice and impropriety; he may

prescribe rules, therefore, which not only prohibit mutual injuries among fellow-citizens, but command mutual good offices to a certain degree. When the sovereign commands what is merely indifferent, and what, antecedent to his orders, might have been omitted without any blame, it becomes not only blamable but punishable to disobey him. When he commands, therefore, what, antecedent to any such order, could not have been omitted without the greatest blame, it surely becomes much more punishable to be wanting in obedience. Of all the duties of a lawgiver, however, this perhaps, is that which it requires the greatest delicacy and reserve to execute with propriety and judgment. To neglect it altogether exposes the commonwealth to many gross disorders and shocking enormities, and to push it too far is destructive of all liberty, security, and justice.

Though the mere want of beneficence seems to merit no punishment from equals, the greater exertions of that virtue appear to deserve the highest reward. By being productive of the greatest good, they are the natural and approved objects of the livelíest gratitude. Though the breach of justice, on the contrary, exposes to punishment, the observance of the rules of that virtue seems

ſcarce to deſerve any reward. There is, no doubt, a propriety in the practice of juſtice, and it merits, upon that account, all the approbation which is due to propriety. But as it does no real poſitive good, it is entitled to very little gratitude. Mere juſtice is, upon moſt occaſions, but a negative virtue, and only hinders us from hurting our neighbour. The man who barely abſtains from violating either the perſon, or the eſtate, or the reputation of his neighbours, has ſurely very little poſitive merit. He fulfils, however, all the rules of what is peculiarly called juſtice, and does every thing which his equals can with propriety force him to do, or which they can puniſh him for not doing. We may often fulfil all the rules of juſtice by ſitting ſtill and doing nothing.

As every man doth, ſo it ſhall be done to him, and retaliation ſeems to be the great law which is dictated to us by Nature. Beneficence and generoſity we think due to the generous and beneficent. Thoſe whoſe hearts never open to the feelings of humanity, ſhould, we think, be ſhut out in the ſame manner, from the affections of all their fellow-creatures, and be allowed to live in the midſt of ſociety, as in a great deſert where there is nobody to care for them, or to in-

quire after them. The violator of the laws of juſtice ought to be made to feel himſelf that evil which he has done to another; and ſince no regard to the ſufferings of his brethren is capable of reſtraining him, he ought to be overawed by the fear of his own. The man who is barely innocent, who only obſerves the laws of juſtice with regard to others, and merely abſtains from hurting his neighbours, can merit only that his neighbours in their turn ſhould reſpect his innocence, and that the ſame laws ſhould be religiouſly obſerved with regard to him.

CHAP. II.

Of the ſenſe of Juſtice, of Remorſe, and of the conſciouſneſs of Merit.

THERE can be no proper motive for hurting our neighbour, there can be no incitement to do evil to another, which mankind will go along with, except juſt indignation for evil which that other has done to us. To diſturb his happineſs merely becauſe it ſtands in the way of our own, to take from him

him what is of real uſe to him merely becauſe it may be of equal or of more uſe to us, or to indulge in this manner at the expence of other people, the natural preference which every man has for his own happineſs above that of other people is what no impartial ſpectator can go along with. Every man is, no doubt, by nature firſt and principally recommended to his own care; and as he is fitter to take care of himſelf than of any other perſon, it is fit and right that it ſhould be ſo. Every man, therefore, is much more deeply intereſted in whatever immediately concerns himſelf, than in what concerns any other man: and to hear, perhaps, of the death of another perſon, with whom we have no particular connexion, will give us leſs concern, will ſpoil our ſtomach, or break our reſt much leſs than a very inſignificant diſaſter which has befallen ourſelves. But though the ruin of our neighbour may affect us much leſs than a very ſmall misfortune of our own, we muſt not ruin him to prevent that ſmall misfortune, nor even to prevent our own ruin. We muſt, here, as in all other caſes, view ourſelves not ſo much according to that light in which we may naturally appear to ourſelves, as according to that in which we naturally appear to others.

Though every man may, according to the proverb, be the whole world to himſelf, to the reſt of mankind he is a moſt inſignificant part of it. Though his own happineſs may be of more importance to him than that of all the world beſides, to every other perſon it is of no more conſequence than that of any other man. Though it may be true, therefore, that every individual in his own breaſt, naturally prefers himſelf to all mankind, yet he dares not look mankind in the face, and avow that he acts according to this principle. He feels that in this preference they can never go along with him, and that how natural ſo ever it may be to him, it muſt always appear exceſſive and extravagant to them. When he views himſelf in the light in which he is conſcious that others will view him, he ſees that to them he is but one of the multitude in no reſpect better than any other in it. If he would act ſo as that the impartial ſpectator may enter into the principles of his conduct which is what of all things he has the greateſt deſire to do, he muſt upon this, as upon all other occaſions, humble the arrogance of his ſelf-love, and bring it down to ſomething which other men can go along with. They will indulge it ſo far as to allow him to be more anxious about,

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and to purſue with more earneſt aſſiduity, his own happineſs than that of any other perſon. Thus far, whenever they place themſelves in his ſituation, they will readily go along with him. In the race for wealth, and honours, and preferments, he may run as hard as he can, and ſtrain every nerve and every muſcle, in order to outſtrip all his competitors. But if he ſhould juſtle, or throw down any of them, the indulgence of the ſpectators is entirely at an end. It is a violation of fair play which they cannot admit of. This man is to them, in every reſpect as good as he: they do not enter into that ſelf-love by which he prefers himſelf ſo much to this other, and cannot go along with the motive from which he hurt him. They readily, therefore ſympathize with the natural reſentment of the injured, and the offender becomes the object of their hatred and indignation. He is ſenſible that he becomes ſo, and feels that thoſe ſentiments are ready to burſt out from all ſides againſt him.

As the greater and more irreparable the evil that is done, the reſentment of the ſufferer runs naturally the higher; ſo does likewiſe the ſympathetic indignation of the ſpectator, as well as the ſenſe of guilt in the agent. Death is the greateſt evil which one man

man can inflict upon another, and excites the higheſt degree of reſentment in thoſe who are immediately connected with the ſlain. Murder, therefore, is the moſt atrocious of all crimes, which affect individuals only, in the ſight both of mankind, and of the perſon who has committed it. To be deprived of that which we are poſſeſſed of, is a greater evil than to be diſappointed of what we have only the expectation. Breach of property, therefore, theft, and robbery, which take from us what we are poſſeſſed of, are greater crimes than breach of contract, which only diſappoints us of what we expected. The moſt ſacred laws of juſtice, therefore, thoſe whoſe violation ſeems to call loudeſt for vengeance and puniſhment, are the laws which guard the life and perſon of our neighbour; and next are thoſe which guard his property and poſſeſſions; and laſt of all come thoſe which guard what are called his perſonal rights, or what is due to him from the promiſes of others.

The violator of the more ſacred laws of juſtice can never reflect on the ſentiments which mankind muſt entertain with regard to him, without feeling all the agonies of ſhame, and horror, and conſternation. When his paſſion is gratified, and he begins coolly to reflect on his

his paſt conduct, he can enter into none of the motives which influenced it. They appear now as deteſtable to him as they did always to other people. By ſympathizing with the hatred and abhorrence which other men muſt entertain for him, he becomes in ſome meaſure the object of his own hatred and abhorrence. The ſituation of the perſon, who ſuffered by his injuſtice, now calls upon his pity. He is grieved at the thought of it; regrets the unhappy effects of his own conduct, and feels at the ſame time that they have rendered him the proper object of the reſentment and indignation of mankind, and of what is the natural conſequence of reſentment, vengeance and puniſhment. The thought of this perpetually haunts him, and fills him with terror and amazement. He dares no longer look ſociety in the face, but imagines himſelf as it were rejected, and thrown out from the affections of all mankind. He cannot hope for the conſolation of ſympathy in this his greateſt and moſt dreadful diſtreſs. The remembrance of his crimes has ſhut out all fellow-feeling with him from the hearts of his fellow-creatures. The ſentiments which they entertain with regard to him, are the very thing which he is moſt afraid of. Every thing ſeems hoſtile,

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and he would be glad to fly to ſome inhoſpitable deſert, where he might never more behold the face of a human creature, nor read in the countenance of mankind the condemnation of his crimes. But ſolitude is ſtill more dreadful than ſociety. His own thoughts can preſent him with nothing but what is black, unfortunate, and diſaſtrous, the melancholy forebodings of incomprehenſible miſery and ruin. The horror of ſolitude drives him back into ſociety, and he comes again into the preſence of mankind, aſtoniſhed to appear before them loaded with ſhame and diſtracted with fear, in order to ſupplicate ſome little protection from the countenance of thoſe very judges, who he knows have already all unanimouſly condemned him. Such is the nature of that ſentiment, which is properly called remorſe; of all the ſentiments which can enter the human breaſt the moſt dreadful. It is made up of ſhame from the ſenſe of the impropriety of paſt conduct; of grief for the effects of it; of pity for thoſe who ſuffer by it; and of the dread and terror of puniſhment from the conſciouſneſs of the juſtly-provoked reſentment of all rational creatures.

The oppoſite behaviour naturally inſpires the oppoſite ſentiment. The man who, not

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from frivolous fancy, but from proper motives has performed a generous action, when he looks forward to thoſe whom he has ſerved, feels himſelf to be the natural object of their love and, gratitude, and by ſympathy with them, of the eſteem and approbation of all mankind. And when he looks backward, to the motive from which he acted, and ſurveys it in the light in which the indifferent ſpectator will ſurvey it, he ſtill continues to enter into it, and applauds himſelf by ſympathy with the approbation of this ſuppoſed impartial judge. In both theſe points of view his own conduct appears to him every way agreeable. His mind, at the thought of it, is filled with cheerfulneſs, ſerenity, and compoſure. He is in friendſhip and harmony with all mankind, and looks upon his fellow-creatures with confidence, and benevolent ſatisfaction, ſecure that he has rendered himſelf worthy of their moſt favourable regards. In the combination of all theſe ſentiments conſiſts the conſciouſneſs of merit, or of deſerved reward.

CHAP. III.

Of the utility of this conſtitution of Nature.

IT is thus that man, who can ſubſiſt only in ſociety, was fitted by nature to that ſituation for which he was made. All the members of human ſociety ſtand in need of each other's aſſiſtance, and are likewiſe expoſed to mutual injuries. Where the neceſſary aſſiſtance is reciprocally afforded from love, from gratitude, from friendſhip, and eſteem, the ſociety flouriſhes and is happy. All the different members of it are bound together by the agreeable bands of love and affection, and are, as it were, drawn to one common centre of mutual good offices.

But though the neceſſary aſſiſtance ſhould not be afforded from ſuch generous and diſintereſted motives, though among the different members of the ſociety there ſhould be no mutual love and affection, the ſociety though leſs happy and agreeable, will not neceſſarily be diſſolved. Society may ſubſiſt among different men, as among different merchants, from a ſenſe of its utility without any mutual love

love or affection; and though no man in it ſhould owe any obligation, or be bound in gratitude to any other, it may ſtill be upheld by a mercenary exchange of good offices according to an agreed valuation.

Society, however, cannot ſubſiſt among thoſe who are at all times ready to hurt and injure one another. The moment that injury begins, the moment that mutual reſentment and animoſity take place, all the bands of it are broke aſunder, and the different members of which it conſiſted are, as it were, diſſipated and ſcattered abroad by the violence and oppoſition of their diſcordant affections. If there is any ſociety among robbers and murderers, they muſt at leaſt, according to the trite obſervation, abſtain from robbing and murdering one another. Beneficence, therefore, is leſs eſſential to the exiſtence of ſociety than juſtice. Society may ſubſiſt, though not in the moſt comfortable ſtate, without beneficence: but the prevalence of injuſtice muſt utterly deſtroy it.

Though nature, therefore, exhorts mankind to acts of beneficence by the pleaſing conſciouſneſs of deſerved reward, ſhe has not thought it neceſſary to guard and enforce the practice of it by the terrors of merited puniſhment in caſe it ſhould be neglected.

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It is the ornament which embelliſhes, not the foundation which ſupports the building, and which it was, therefore, ſufficient to recommend, but by no means neceſſary to impoſe. Juſtice, on the contrary, is the main pillar that upholds the whole edifice. If it is removed, the great, the immenſe fabric of human ſociety, that fabric which to raiſe and ſupport ſeems in this world, if I may ſay ſo, to have been the peculiar and darling care of Nature, muſt in a moment crumble into atoms. In order to enforce the obſervation of juſtice, therefore, Nature has implanted in the human breaſt that conſciouſneſs of ill-deſert, thoſe terrors of merited puniſhment which attend upon its violation, as the great ſafeguards of the aſſociation of mankind, to protect the weak, to curb the violent, and to chaſtiſe the guilty. Men, though naturally ſympathetic, feel ſo little for another, with whom they have no particular connexion, in compariſon of what they feel for themſelves; the miſery of one, who is merely their fellow-creature, is of ſo little importance to them in compariſon even of a ſmall conveniency of their own; they have it ſo much in their power to hurt him, and may have ſo many temptations to do ſo, that if this principle did not ſtand up within them in his defence, and overawe

overawe them into a reſpect for his innocence, they would, like wild beaſts, be at all times ready to fly upon him; and a man would enter an aſſembly of men as he enters a den of lions.

In every part of the univerſe we obſerve means adjuſted with the niceſt artifice to the ends which they are intended to produce, and in the mechaniſm of a plant, or animal body, admire how every thing is contrived for advancing the two great purpoſes of nature, the ſupport of the individual, and the propagation of the ſpecies. But in theſe, and in all ſuch objects, we ſtill diſtinguiſh the efficient from the final cauſe of their ſeveral motions and organizations. The digeſtion of the food, the circulation of the blood, and the ſecretion of the ſeveral juices which are drawn from it, are operations all of them neceſſary for the great purpoſes of animal life. Yet we never endeavour to account for them from thoſe purpoſes as from their efficient cauſes, nor imagine that the blood circulates, or that the food digeſts of its own accord, and with a view or intention to the purpoſes of circulation or digeſtion. The wheels of the watch are all admirably adjuſted to the end for which it was made, the pointing of the hour. All their various motions conſpire in

the niceſt manner to produce this effect. If they were endowed with a deſire and intention to produce it, they could not do it better. Yet we never aſcribe any ſuch deſire or intention to them, but to the watch-maker, and we know that they are put into motion by a ſpring, which intends the effect it produces as little as they do. But though, in accounting for the operations of bodies, we never fail to diſtinguiſh in this manner the efficient from the final cauſe, in accounting for thoſe of the mind we are very apt to confound theſe two different things with one another. When by natural principles we are led to advance thoſe ends which a refined and enlightened reaſon would recommend to us, we are very apt to impute to that reaſon, as to their efficient cauſe, the ſentiments and actions by which we advance thoſe ends, and to imagine that to be the wiſdom of man, which in reality is the wiſdom of God. Upon a ſuperficial view, this cauſe ſeems ſufficient to produce the effects which are aſcribed to it; and the ſyſtem of human nature ſeems to be more ſimple and agreeable when all its different operations are in this manner deduced from a ſingle principle.

As ſociety cannot ſubſiſt unleſs the laws of juſtice are tolerably obſerved, as no ſocial intercourſe

tercourſe can take place among men who do not generally abſtain from injuring one another; the conſideration of this neceſſity, it has been thought, was the ground upon which we approved of the enforcement of the laws of juſtice by the puniſhment of thoſe who violated them. Man, it has been ſaid, has a natural love for ſociety, and deſires that the union of mankind ſhould be preſerved for its own ſake, and though he himſelf was to derive no benefit from it. The orderly and flouriſhing ſtate of ſociety is agreeable to him, and he takes delight in contemplating it. Its diſorder and confuſion, on the contrary, is the object of his averſion, and he is chagrined at whatever tends to produce it. He is ſenſible too that his own intereſt is connected with the proſperity of ſociety, and that the happineſs, perhaps the preſervation of his exiſtence, depends upon its preſervation. Upon every account, therefore, he has an abhorrence at whatever can tend to deſtroy ſociety, and is willing to make uſe of every means, which can hinder ſo hated and ſo dreadful an event. Injuſtice neceſſarily tends to deſtroy it. Every appearance of injuſtice, therefore alarms him, and he runs, if I may ſay ſo, to ſtop the progreſs of what, if allowed to go on, would quickly put an

end to every thing that is dear to him. If he cannot reſtrain it by gentle and fair means, he muſt bear it down by force and violence, and at any rate muſt put a ſtop to its further progreſs. Hence it is, they ſay, that he often approves of the enforcement of the laws of juſtice even by the capital puniſhment of thoſe who violate them. The diſturber of the public peace is hereby removed out of the world, and others are terrified by his fate from imitating his example.

Such is the account commonly given of our approbation of the puniſhment of injuſtice. And ſo far this account is undoubtedly true, that we frequently have occaſion to confirm our natural ſenſe of the propriety and fitneſs of puniſhment, by reflecting how neceſſary it is for preſerving the order of ſociety. When the guilty is about to ſuffer that juſt retaliation, which the natural indignation of mankind tells them is due to his crimes; when the inſolence of his injuſtice is broken and humbled by the terror of his approaching puniſhment; when he ceaſes to be an object of fear, with the generous and humane he begins to be an object of pity. The thought of what he is about to ſuffer extinguiſhes their reſentment for the ſufferings of others to which he has given occaſion. They are

diſpoſed

diſpoſed to pardon and forgive him, and to ſave him from that puniſhment, which in all their cool hours they had conſidered as the retribution due to ſuch crimes. Here, therefore, they have occaſion to call to their aſſiſtance the conſideration of the general intereſt of ſociety. They counter-balance the impulſe of this weak and partial humanity by the dictates of a humanity that is more generous and comprehenſive. They reflect that mercy to the guilty is cruelty to the innocent, and oppoſe to the emotions of compaſſion which they feel for a particular perſon a more enlarged compaſſion which they feel for mankind.

Sometimes too we have occaſion to defend the propriety of obſerving the general rules of juſtice by the conſideration of their neceſſity to the ſupport of ſociety. We frequently hear the young and the licentious ridiculing the moſt ſacred rules of morality, and profeſſing ſometimes from the corruption, but more frequently from the vanity of their hearts, the moſt abominable maxims of conduct. Our indignation rouſes, and we are eager to refute and expoſe ſuch deteſtable principles. But though it is their intrinſic hatefulneſs and deteſtableneſs, which originally inflames us againſt them, we are unwil-

ling to assign this as the sole reason why we condemn them, or to pretend that it is merely because we ourselves hate and detest them. The reason we think, would not appear to be conclusive. Yet why should it not; if we hate and detest them because they are the natural and proper objects of hatred and detestation? But when we are asked why we should not act in such or such a manner, the very question seems to suppose that, to those who ask it, this manner of acting does not appear to be for its own sake the natural and proper object of those sentiments. We must show them, therefore, that it ought to be so for the sake of something else. Upon this account we generally cast about for other arguments, and the consideration which first occurs to us, is the disorder and confusion of society which would result from the universal prevalence of such practices. We seldom fail, therefore, to insist upon this topic.

But though it commonly requires no great discernment to see the destructive tendency of all licentious practices to the welfare of society, it is seldom this consideration which first animates us against them. All men, even the most stupid and unthinking, abhor fraud, perfidy, and injustice, and delight to

ſee them puniſhed. But few men have reflected upon the neceſſity of juſtice to the exiſtence of ſociety, how obvious ſoever that neceſſity may appear to be.

That it is not a regard to the preſervation of ſociety, which originally intereſts us in the puniſhment of crimes committed againſt individuals, may be demonſtrated by many obvious conſiderations. The concern which we take in the fortune and happineſs of individuals does not, in common caſes, ariſe from that which we take in the fortune and happineſs of ſociety. We are no more concerned for the deſtruction or loſs of a ſingle man, becauſe this man is a member or part of ſociety, and becauſe we ſhould be concerned for the deſtruction of ſociety, than we are concerned for the loſs of a ſingle guinea, becauſe this guinea is part of a thouſand guineas, and becauſe we ſhould be concerned for the loſs of the whole ſum. In neither caſe does our regard for the idinviduals ariſe from our regard to the multitude: but in both caſes our regard for the multitude is compounded and made up of the particular regards which we feel for the different individuals of which it is compoſed. As when a ſmall ſum is unjuſtly taken from us, we do not ſo much proſecute the injury from a regard to the preſervation

of our whole fortune, as from a regard to that particular ſum which we have loſt; ſo when a ſingle man is injured, or deſtroyed, we demand the puniſhment of the wrong that has been done to him, not ſo much from a concern for the general intereſt of ſociety, as from a concern for that very individual who has been injured. It is to be obſerved, however, that this concern does not neceſſarily include in it any degree of thoſe exquiſite ſentiments which are commonly called love, eſteem, and affection, and by which we diſtinguiſh our particular friends and acquaintance. The concern which is requiſite for this, is no more than the general fellow-feeling which we have with every man merely becauſe he is our fellow-creature. We enter into the reſentment even of an odious perſon, when he is injured by thoſe to whom he has given no provocation. Our diſapprobation of his ordinary character and conduct does not in this caſe altogether prevent our fellow-feeling with his natural indignation; though with thoſe who are not either extremely candid, or who have not been accuſtomed to correct and regulate their natural ſentiments by general rules, it is very apt to damp it.

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Upon ſome occaſions, indeed, we both puniſh and approve of puniſhment, merely from a view to the general intereſt of ſociety, which, we imagine, cannot otherwiſe be ſecured. Of this kind are all the puniſhments inflicted for breaches of what is called either civil police, or military diſcipline. Such crimes do not immediately or indirectly hurt any particular perſon; but their remote conſequences, it is ſuppoſed, do produce, or might produce, either a conſiderable inconveniency, or a great diſorder in the ſociety. A centinel, for example, who falls aſleep upon his watch, ſuffers death by the laws of war, becauſe ſuch careleſſneſs might endanger the whole army. This ſeverity may, upon many occaſions, appear neceſſary, and, for that reaſon, juſt and proper. When the preſervation of an individual is inconſiſtent with the ſafety of a multitude, nothing can be more juſt than that the many ſhould be preferred to the one. Yet this puniſhment, how neceſſary ſoever, always appears to be exceſſively ſevere. The natural atrocity of the crime ſeems to be ſo little, and the puniſhment ſo great, that it is with great difficulty that our heart can reconcile itſelf to it. Though ſuch careleſſneſs appears very blamable, yet the thought of this crime does not naturally excite

cite any ſuch reſentment, as would prompt us to take ſuch dreadful revenge. A man of humanity muſt recollect himſelf, muſt make an effort, and exert his whole firmneſs and reſolution, before he can bring himſelf either to inflict it, or to go along with it when it is inflicted by others. It is not, however, in this manner, that he looks upon the juſt puniſhment of an ungrateful murderer or parricide. His heart, in this caſe, applauds with ardour, and even with tranſport, the juſt retaliation which ſeems due to ſuch deteſtable crimes, and which, if, by any accident, they ſhould happen to eſcape, he would be highly enraged and diſappointed. The very different ſentiments with which the ſpectator views thoſe different puniſhments, is a proof that his approbation of the one is far from being founded upon the ſame principles with that of the other. He looks upon the centinel as an unfortunate victim, who, indeed, muſt, and ought to be, devoted to the ſafety of numbers, but whom ſtill, in his heart, he would be glad to ſave; and he is only ſorry that the intereſt of the many ſhould oppoſe it. But if the murderer ſhould eſcape from puniſhment, it would excite his higheſt indignation, and he would call upon God to avenge, in another world,

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that crime which the injuſtice of mankind had neglected to chaſtiſe upon earth.

For it well deſerves to be taken notice of, that we are ſo far from imagining that injuſtice ought to be puniſhed in this life, merely on account of the order of ſociety, which cannot otherwiſe be maintained, that Nature teaches us to hope, and religion, we ſuppoſe, authoriſes us to expect, that it will be puniſhed, even in a life to come. Our ſenſe of its ill deſert purſues it, if I may ſay ſo, even beyond the grave, though the example of its puniſhment there cannot ſerve to deter the reſt of mankind, who ſee it not, who know it not, from being guilty of the like practices here. The juſtice of God, however, we think, ſtill requires, that he ſhould hereafter avenge the injuries of the widow and the fatherleſs, who are here ſo often inſulted with impunity. In every religion and in every ſuperſtition that the world has ever beheld, accordingly, there has been a Tartarus as well as an Elyſium; a place provided for the puniſhment of the wicked, as well as one for the reward of the juſt.

SECTION III.

Of the influence of Fortune upon the Sentiments of Mankind, with regard to the Merit or Demerit of Actions.

INTRODUCTION.

WHATEVER praiſe or blame can be due to any action, muſt belong either, firſt, to the intention or affection of the heart, from which it proceeds; or, ſecondly, to the external action or movement of the body, which this affection gives occaſion to; or, laſtly, to the good or bad conſequences, which actually, and in fact, proceed from it. Theſe three different things conſtitute the whole nature and circumſtances of the action, and muſt be the foundation of whatever quality can belong to it.

That the two laſt of theſe three circumſtances cannot be the foundation of any praiſe or blame, is abundantly evident; nor has the contrary ever been aſſerted by any body. The external action or movement of the body

body is often the ſame in the moſt innocent and in the moſt blamable actions. He who ſhoots a bird, and he who ſhoots a man, both of them perform the ſame external movement: each of them draws the trigger of a gun. The conſequences which actually, and in fact, happen to proceed from any action, are, if poſſible, ſtill more indifferent either to praiſe or blame, than even the external movement of the body. As they depend not upon the agent, but upon fortune, they cannot be the proper foundation for any ſentiment, of which his character and conduct are the objects.

The only conſequences for which he can be anſwerable, or by which he can deſerve either approbation or diſapprobation of any kind, are thoſe which were ſomeway or other intended, or thoſe which, at leaſt, ſhow ſome agreeable or diſagreeable quality in the intention of the heart, from which he acted. To the intention or affection of the heart, therefore, to the propriety or impropriety, to the beneficence or hurtfulneſs of the deſign, all praiſe or blame, all approbation or diſapprobation, of any kind, which can juſtly be beſtowed upon any action, muſt ultimately belong.

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When this maxim is thus propoſed, in abſtract and general terms, there is nobody who does not agree to it. Its ſelf-evident juſtice is acknowledged by all the world, and there is not a diſſenting voice among all mankind. Every body allows, that how different ſoever the accidental, the unintended and unforeſeen conſequences of different actions, yet, if the intentions or affections from which they aroſe were, on the one hand, equally proper and equally beneficent, or, on the other, equally improper and equally malevolent, the merit or demerit of the actions is ſtill the ſame, and the agent is equally the ſuitable object either of gratitude or of reſentment.

But how well ſoever we may ſeem to be perſuaded of the truth of this equitable maxim, when we conſider it after this manner, in abſtract, yet when we come to particular caſes, the actual conſequences which happen to proceed from any action, have a very great effect upon our ſentiments concerning its merit or demerit, and almoſt always either enhance or diminiſh our ſenſe of both. Scarce, in any one inſtance, perhaps, will our ſentiments be found, after examination, to be entirely regulated by this rule, which

which we all acknowledge ought entirely to regulate them.

This irregularity of ſentiment, which every body feels, which ſcarce any body is ſufficiently aware of, and which nobody is willing to acknowledge, I proceed now to explain; and I ſhall conſider, firſt, the cauſe which gives occaſion to it, or the mechaniſm by which nature produces it; ſecondly the extent of its influence; and, laſt of all, the end which it anſwers, or the purpoſe which the Author of nature ſeems to have intended by it.

CHAP. I.

Of the cauſes of this Influence of Fortune.

THE cauſes of pain and pleaſure, whatever they are, or however they operate, ſeem to be the objects, which, in all animals, immediately excite thoſe two paſſions of gratitude and reſentment. They are excited by inanimated, as well as by animated objects. We are angry, for a moment, even at the ſtone that hurts us. A child beats it, a dog barks at it, a choleric man is apt to curſe it.

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The leaſt reflection, indeed, corrects this ſentiment, and we ſoon become ſenſible, that what has no feeling is a very improper object of revenge. When the miſchief, however, is very great, the object which cauſed it, becomes diſagreeable to us ever after, and we take pleaſure to burn or deſtroy it. We ſhould treat, in this manner, the inſtrument which had accidentally been the cauſe of the death of a friend, and we ſhould often think ourſelves guilty of a ſort of inhumanity, if we neglected to vent this abſurd ſort of vengeance upon it.

We conceive, in the ſame manner, a ſort of gratitude for thoſe inanimated objects, which have been the cauſes of great or frequent pleaſure to us. The ſailor, who, as ſoon as he got aſhore, ſhould mend his fire with the plank upon which he had juſt eſcaped from a ſhipwreck, would ſeem to be guilty of an unnatural action. We ſhould expect that he would rather preſerve it with care and affection, as a monument that was, in ſome meaſure, dear to him. A man grows fond of a ſnuff box, of a pen-knife, of a ſtaff which he has long made uſe of, and conceives ſomething like a real love and affection for them. If he breaks or loſes them, he is vexed out of all proportion to the value of the damage.

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The houſe which we have long lived in, the tree whoſe verdure and ſhade we have long enjoyed, are both looked upon with a ſort of reſpect that ſeems due to ſuch benefactors. The decay of the one, or the ruin of the other, affects us with a kind of melancholy, though we ſhould ſuſtain no loſs by it. The Dryads and the Lares of the ancients, a ſort of genii of trees and houſes, were probably firſt ſuggeſted by this ſort of affection, which the authors of thoſe ſuperſtitions felt for ſuch objects, and which ſeemed unreaſonable, if there was nothing animated about them.

But, before any thing can be the proper object of gratitude or reſentment, it muſt not only be the cauſe of pleaſure or pain, it muſt likewiſe be capable of feeling them. Without this other quality, thoſe paſſions cannot vent themſelves with any ſort of ſatisfaction upon it. As they are excited by the cauſes of pleaſure and pain, ſo their gratification conſiſts in retaliating thoſe ſenſations upon what gave occaſion to them; which it is to no purpoſe to attempt upon what has no ſenſibility. Animals, therefore, are leſs improper objects of gratitude and reſentment than inanimated objects. The dog that bites, the ox that gores, are both of them puniſhed. If they have been the cauſes of the death of any per-

ſon, neither the public, nor the relations of the ſlain, can be ſatisfied, unleſs they are put to death in their turn: nor is this merely for the ſecurity of the living, but, in ſome meaſure, to revenge the injury of the dead. Thoſe animals, on the contrary, that have been remarkably ſerviceable to their maſters, become the objects of a very lively gratitude. We are ſhocked at the brutality of that officer, mentioned in the Turkiſh Spy, who ſtabbed the horſe that had carried him acroſs an arm of the ſea, leſt that animal ſhould afterwards diſtinguiſh ſome other perſon by a ſimilar adventure.

But, though animals are not only the cauſes of pleaſure and pain, but are alſo capable of feeling thoſe ſenſations, they are ſtill far from being complete and perfect objects either of gratitude or reſentment; and thoſe paſſions ſtill feel, that there is ſomething wanting to their entire gratification. What gratitude chiefly deſires, is not only to make the benefactor feel pleaſure in his turn, but to make him conſcious that he meets with this reward on account of his paſt conduct, to make him pleaſed with that conduct, and to ſatisfy him that the perſon upon whom he beſtowed his good offices was not unworthy of them. What moſt of all charms us in our benefac-

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tor, is the concord between his ſentiments and our own, with regard to what intereſts us ſo nearly as the worth of our own character, and the eſteem that is due to us. We are delighted to find a perſon who values us as we value ourſelves, and diſtinguiſhes us from the reſt of mankind, with an attention not unlike that with which we diſtinguiſh ourſelves. To maintain in him theſe agreeable and flattering ſentiments is one of the chief ends propoſed by the returns we are diſpoſed to make to him. A generous mind often diſdains the intereſted thought of extorting new favours from its benefactor, by what may be called the importunities of its gratitude. But to preſerve and to increaſe his eſteem, is an intereſt which the greateſt mind does not think unworthy of its attention. And this is the foundation of what I formerly obſerved, that when we cannot enter into the motives of our benefactor, when his conduct and character appear unworthy of our approbation, let his ſervices have been ever ſo great, our gratitude is always ſenſibly diminiſhed. We are leſs flattered by the diſtinction; and to preſerve the eſteem of ſo weak, or ſo worthleſs a patron, ſeems to be an object which does not deſerve to be purſued for its own ſake.

The object, on the contrary, which reſentment is chiefly intent upon, is not ſo much to make our enemy feel pain in his turn, as to make him conſcious that he feels it upon account of his paſt conduct, to make him repent of that conduct, and to make him ſenſible that the perſon whom he injured did not deſerve to be treated in that manner. What chiefly enrages us againſt the man who injures or inſults us, is the little account which he ſeems to make of us, the unreaſonable preference which he gives to himſelf above us, and that abſurd ſelf-love, by which he ſeems to imagine, that other people may be ſacrificed at any time, to his conveniency or his humour. The glaring impropriety of this conduct, the groſs inſolence and injuſtice which it ſeems to involve in it, often ſhock and exaſperate us more than all the miſchief which we have ſuffered. To bring him back to a more juſt ſenſe of what is due to other people, to make him ſenſible of what he owes us, and of the wrong that he has done to us, is frequently the principal end propoſed in our revenge, which is always imperfect when it cannot accompliſh this. When our enemy appears to have done us no injury, when we are ſenſible that he acted quite properly, that,

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in his ſituation, we ſhould have done the ſame thing, and that we deſerved from him all the miſchief we met with; in that caſe, if we have the leaſt ſpark either of candour or juſtice, we can entertain no ſort of reſentment.

Before any thing, therefore, can be the complete and proper object, either of gratitude or reſentment, it muſt poſſeſs three different qualifications. Firſt, it muſt be the cauſe of pleaſure in the one caſe, and of pain in the other. Secondly, it muſt be capable of feeling thoſe ſenſations. And thirdly, it muſt not only have produced thoſe ſenſations, but it muſt have produced them from deſign, and from a deſign that is approved of in the one caſe, and diſapproved of in the other. It is by the firſt qualification that any object is capable of exciting thoſe paſſions: it is by the ſecond, that it is in any reſpect capable of gratifying them: the third qualification is not only neceſſary for their complete ſatisfaction, but as it gives a pleaſure or pain that is both exquiſite and peculiar, it is likewiſe an additional exciting cauſe of thoſe paſſions.

As what gives pleaſure or pain, therefore, either in one way or another, is the ſole exciting cauſe of gratitude and reſentment; though the intentions of any perſon ſhould be ever ſo

proper and beneficent, on the one hand, or ever ſo improper and malevolent on the other; yet, if he has failed in producing either the good or the evil which he intended, as one of the exciting cauſes is wanting in both caſes, leſs gratitude ſeems due to him in the one, and leſs reſentment in the other. And, on the contrary, though in the intentions of any perſon, there was either no laudable degree of benevolence on the one hand, or no blamable degree of malice on the other; yet, if his actions ſhould produce either great good or great evil, as one of the exciting cauſes takes place upon both theſe occaſions, ſome gratitude is apt to ariſe towards him in the one and ſome reſentment in the other. A ſhadow of merit ſeems to fall upon him in the firſt, a ſhadow of demerit in the ſecond. And, as the conſequences of actions are altogether under the empire of Fortune, hence ariſes her influence upon the ſentiments of mankind with regard to merit and demerit.

CHAP. II.

Of the extent of this influence of Fortune.

THE effect of this influence of fortune is, firſt, to diminiſh our ſenſe of the merit or demerit of thoſe actions which aroſe from the moſt laudable or blamable intentions, when they fail of producing their propoſed effects: and, ſecondly, to increaſe our ſenſe of the merit or demerit of actions, beyond what is due to the motives or affections from which they proceed, when they accidentally give occaſion either to extraordinary pleaſure or pain.

1. Firſt, I ſay, though the intentions of any perſon ſhould be ever ſo proper and beneficent, on the one hand, or ever ſo improper and malevolent, on the other, yet, if they fail in producing their effects, his merit ſeems imperfect in the one caſe, and his demerit incomplete in the other. Nor is this irregularity of ſentiment felt only by thoſe who are immediately affected by the conſequences of any action. It is felt, in ſome meaſure, even by the impartial ſpectator. The man who

ſolicits an office for another, without obtaining it, is regarded as his friend, and ſeems to deſerve his love and affection. But the man who not only ſolicits, but procures it, is more peculiarly conſidered as his patron and benefactor, and is entitled to his reſpect and gratitude. The perſon obliged, we are apt to think, may, with ſome juſtice, imagine himſelf on a level with the firſt: but we cannot enter into his ſentiments, if he does not feel himſelf inferior to the ſecond. It is common indeed to ſay, that we are equally obliged to the man who has endeavoured to ſerve us, as to him who actually did ſo. It is the ſpeech which we conſtantly make upon every unſucceſsful attempt of this kind; but which, like all other fine ſpeeches, muſt be underſtood with a grain of allowance. The ſentiments which a man of generoſity entertains for the friend who fails, may often indeed be nearly the ſame with thoſe which he conceives for him who ſucceeds: and the more generous he is, the more nearly will thoſe ſentiments approach to an exact level. With the truly generous, to be beloved, to be eſteemed by thoſe whom they themſelves think worthy of eſteem, gives more pleaſure, and thereby excites more gratitude, than all the advantages which they can ever expect from thoſe ſentiments.

ments. When they loſe thoſe advantages, therefore, they ſeem to loſe but a trifle, which is ſcarce worth regarding. They ſtill however loſe ſomething. Their pleaſure therefore, and conſequently their gratitude, is not perfectly complete: and accordingly if, between the friend who fails and the friend who ſucceeds, all other circumſtances are equal, there will, even in the nobleſt and the beſt mind, be ſome little difference of affection in favour of him who ſucceeds. Nay, ſo unjuſt are mankind in this reſpect, that though the intended benefit ſhould be procured, yet if it is not procured by the means of a particular benefactor, they are apt to think that leſs gratitude is due to the man, who with the beſt intentions in the world could do no more than help it a little forward. As their gratitude is in this caſe divided among the different perſons who contributed to their pleaſure, a ſmaller ſhare of it ſeems due to any one. Such a perſon, we hear men commonly ſay, intended no doubt to ſerve us; and we really believe exerted himſelf to the utmoſt of his abilities for that purpoſe. We are not, however, obliged to him for this benefit; ſince, had it not been for the concurrence of others, all that he could have done would never have brought

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it about. This conſideration, they imagine, ſhould, even in the eyes of the impartial ſpectator, diminiſh the debt which they owe to him. The perſon himſelf who has unſucceſsfully endeavoured to confer a benefit, has by no means the ſame dependency upon the gratitude of the man whom he meant to oblige, nor the ſame ſenſe of his own merit towards him, which he would have had in the caſe of ſucceſs.

Even the merit of talents and abilities which ſome accident has hindered from producing their effects, ſeems in ſome meaſure imperfect, even to thoſe who are fully convinced of their capacity to produce them. The general who has been hindered by the envy of miniſters from gaining ſome great advantage over the enemies of his country, regrets the loſs of the opportunity for ever after. Nor is it only upon account of the public that he regrets it. He laments that he was hindered from performing an action which would have added a new luſtre to his character in his own eyes, as well as in thoſe of every other perſon. It ſatisfies neither himſelf nor others to reflect that the plan or deſign was all that depended on him, that no greater capacity was required to execute it than what was neceſſary to concert it: that

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he was allowed to be every way capable of executing it, and that, had he been permitted to go on, ſucceſs was infallible. He ſtill did not execute it! and though he might deſerve all the approbation which is due to a magnanimous and great deſign, he ſtill wanted the actual merit of having performed a great action. To take the management of any affair of public concern from the man who has almoſt brought it to a concluſion, is regarded as the moſt invidious injuſtice. As he had done ſo much, he ſhould, we think, have been allowed to acquire the complete merit of putting an end to it. It was objected to Pompey, that he came in upon the victories of Lucullus, and gathered thoſe laurels which were due to the fortune and valour of another. The glory of Lucullus, it ſeems, was leſs complete even in the opinion of his own friends, when he was not permitted to finiſh that conqueſt which his conduct and courage had put in the power of almoſt any man to finiſh. It mortifies an architect when his plans are either not executed at all, or when they are ſo far altered as to ſpoil the effect of the building. The plan, however, is all that depends upon the architect. The whole of his genius is, to good judges, as completely diſcovered in that

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as in the actual execution. But a plan does not, even to the moſt intelligent, give the ſame pleaſure as a noble and magnificent building. They may diſcover as much both of taſte and genius in the one as in the other. But their effects are ſtill vaſtly different, and the amuſement derived from the firſt never approaches to the wonder and admiration which are ſometimes excited by the ſecond. We may believe of many men, that their talents are ſuperior to thoſe of Cæſar and Alexander; and that in the ſame ſituations they would perform ſtill greater actions. In the mean time, however, we do not behold them with that aſtoniſhment and admiration with which thoſe two heroes have been regarded in all ages and nations. The calm judgments of the mind may approve of them more, but they want the ſplendour of great actions to dazzle and tranſport it. The ſuperiority of virtues and talents has not, even upon thoſe who acknowledge that ſuperiority, the ſame effect with the ſuperiority of achievements.

As the merit of an unſucceſsful attempt to do good ſeems thus, in the eyes of ungrateful mankind, to be diminiſhed by the miſcarriage, ſo does likewiſe the demerit of an unſucceſsful attempt to do evil. The deſign to commit

mit a crime, how clearly ſoever it may be proved, is ſcarcely ever puniſhed with the ſame ſeverity as the actual commiſſion of it. The caſe of treaſon is perhaps the only exception. That crime immediately affecting the being of the government itſelf, the government is naturally more jealous of it than of any other. In the puniſhment of treaſon, the ſovereign reſents the injuries which are immediately done to himſelf: in the puniſhment of other crimes, he reſents thoſe which are done to other men. It is his own reſentment which he indulges in the one caſe: it is that of his ſubjects which by ſympathy he enters into in the other. Inthe firſt caſe, therefore, as he judges in his own cauſe, he is very apt to be more violent and ſanguinary in his puniſhments than the impartial ſpectator can approve of. His reſentment too riſes here upon ſmaller occaſions, and does not always, as in other caſes, wait for the perpetration of the crime, or even for the attempt to commit it. A treaſonable concert, though nothing has been done, or even attempted in conſequence of it, nay, a treaſonable converſation, is in many countries puniſhed in the ſame manner as the actual commiſſion of treaſon. With regard to all other crimes, the mere deſign, upon which no attempt has followed,

is ſeldom puniſhed at all, and is never puniſhed ſeverely. A criminal deſign, and a criminal action, it may be ſaid, indeed, do not neceſſarily ſuppoſe the ſame degree of depravity, and ought not therefore to be ſubjected to the ſame puniſhment. We are capable, it may be ſaid, of reſolving, and even of taking meaſures to execute, many things, which, when it comes to the point, we feel ourſelves altogether incapable of executing. But this reaſon can have no place when the deſign has been carried the length of the laſt attempt. The man, however, who fires a piſtol at his enemy, but miſſes him, is puniſhed with death by the laws of ſcarcely any country. By the old law of Scotland, though he ſhould wound him, yet unleſs death enſues within a certain time, the aſſaſſin is not liable to the laſt puniſhment. The reſentment of mankind, however, runs ſo high againſt this crime, their terror for the man who ſhows himſelf capable of committing it, is ſo great, that the mere attempt to commit it ought in all countries to be capital. The attempt to commit ſmaller crimes is almoſt always puniſhed very lightly, and ſometimes is not puniſhed at all. The thief, whoſe hand has been caught in his neighbour's pocket before he had taken any thing out of it, is puniſhed

puniſhed with ignominy only. If he had got time to take away an handkerchief, he would have been put to death. The houſe-breaker, who has been found ſetting a ladder to his neighbour's window, but had not got into it, is not expoſed to the capital puniſhment. The attempt to raviſh is not puniſhed as a rape. The attempt to ſeduce a married woman is not puniſhed at all, though ſeduction is puniſhed ſeverely. Our reſentment againſt the perſon who only attempted to do a miſchief, is ſeldom ſo ſtrong as to bear us out in inflicting the ſame puniſhment upon him, which we ſhould have thought due if he had actually done it. In the one caſe, the joy of our deliverance alleviates our ſenſe of the atrocity of his conduct; in the other the grief of our misfortune increaſes it. His real demerit, however, is undoubtedly the ſame in both caſes, ſince his intentions were equally criminal; and there is in this reſpect, therefore, an irregularity in the ſentiments of all men, and a conſequent relaxation of diſcipline, in the laws of, I believe, all nations, of the moſt civilized, as well as of the moſt barbarous. The humanity of a civilized people diſpoſes them either to diſpenſe with, or to mitigate puniſhments wherever their natural indignation is not goaded on by the con-

consequences of the crime. Barbarians, on the other hand, when no actual consequence has happened from any action, are not apt to be very delicate or inquisitive about the motives.

The person, himself, who either from passion, or from the influence of bad company, has resolved, and perhaps taken measures to perpetrate some crime, but who has fortunately been prevented by an accident, which put it out of his power, is sure, if he has any remains of conscience, to regard this event all his life after as a great and signal deliverance. He can never think of it without returning thanks to Heaven for having been thus graciously pleased to save him from the guilt in which he was just ready to plunge himself, and to hinder him from rendering all the rest of his life a scene of horror, remorse, and repentance. But though his hands are innocent, he is conscious that his heart is equally guilty as if he had actually executed what he was so fully resolved upon. It gives great ease to his conscience, however, to consider that the crime was not executed, though he knows that the failure arose from no virtue in him. He still considers himself as less deserving of punishment and resentment; and this good fortune either diminishes,

diminiſhes, or takes away altogether, all ſenſe of guilt. To remember how much he was reſolved upon it, has no other effect than to make him regard his eſcape as the greater and more miraculous: for he ſtill fancies that he has eſcaped, and he looks back upon the danger to which his peace of mind was expoſed, with that terror, with which one who is in ſafety may ſometimes remember the hazard he was of falling over a precipice, and ſhudder with horror at the thought.

2. The ſecond effect of this influence of fortune, is to increaſe our ſenſe of the merit or demerit of actions beyond what is due to the motives or affection from which they proceed, when they happen to give occaſion to extraordinary pleaſure or pain. The agreeable or diſagreeable effects of the action often throw a ſhadow of merit or demerit upon the agent, though in his intention there was nothing that deſerved either praiſe or blame, or at leaſt that deſerved them in the degree in which we are apt to beſtow them. Thus, even the meſſenger of bad news is diſagreeable to us, and, on the contrary, we feel a ſort of gratitude for the man who brings us good tidings. For a moment we look upon them both as the authors, the one of our good, the other of our bad for-

tune, and regard them in ſome meaſure as if they had really brought about the events which they only give an account of. The firſt author of our joy is naturally the object of a tranſitory gratitude: we embrace him with warmth and affection, and ſhould be glad, during the inſtant of our proſperity, to reward him as for ſome ſignal ſervice. By the cuſtom of all courts, the officer who brings the news of a victory, is entitled to conſiderable preferments, and the general always chuſes one of his principal favourites to go upon ſo agreeable an errand. The firſt author of our ſorrow is, on the contrary, juſt as naturally the object of a tranſitory reſentment. We can ſcarce avoid looking upon him with chagrin and uneaſineſs: and the rude and brutal are apt to vent upon him that ſpleen which his intelligence gives occaſion to. Tigranes, king of Armenia, ſtruck off the head of the man who brought him the firſt account of the approach of a formidable enemy. To puniſh in this manner the author of bad tidings, ſeems barbarous and inhuman: yet, to reward the meſſenger of good news, is not diſagreeable to us; we think it ſuitable to the bounty of kings. But why do we make this difference, ſince, if there is no fault in the one, neither is there

any

any merit in the other? It is becauſe any ſort of reaſon ſeems ſufficient to authorize the exertion of the ſocial and benevolent affections; but it requires the moſt ſolid and ſubſtantial to make us enter into that of the unſocial and malevolent.

But though in general we are averſe to enter into the unſocial and malevolent affections, though we lay it down for a rule that we ought never to approve of their gratification, unleſs ſo far as the malicious and unjuſt intention of the perſon, againſt whom they are directed, renders him their proper object; yet, upon ſome occaſions, we relax of this ſeverity. When the negligence of one man has occaſioned ſome unintended damage to another, we generally enter ſo far into the reſentment of the ſufferer, as to approve of his inflicting a puniſhment upon the offender much beyond what the offence would have appeared to deſerve, had no ſuch unlucky conſequence followed from it.

There is a degree of negligence which would appear to deſerve ſome chaſtiſement though it ſhould occaſion no damage to any body. Thus, if a perſon ſhould throw a large ſtone over a wall into a public ſtreet without giving warning to thoſe who might be paſſing by, and without regarding where

it was likely to fall, he would undoubtedly deſerve ſome chaſtiſement. A very accurate police would puniſh ſo abſurd an action, even though it had done no miſchief. The perſon who has been guilty of it, ſhows an inſolent contempt of the happineſs and ſafety of others. There is real injuſtice in his conduct. He wantonly expoſes his neighbour to what no man in his ſenſes would chuſe to expoſe himſelf, and evidently wants that ſenſe of what is due to his fellow-creatures which is the baſis of juſtice and of ſociety. Groſs negligence therefore is, in the law, ſaid to be almoſt equal to malicious deſign*. When any unlucky conſequences happen from ſuch careleſſneſs, the perſon who has been guilty of it is often puniſhed as if he had really intended thoſe conſequences; and his conduct, which was only thoughtleſs and inſolent, and what deſerved ſome chaſtiſement, is conſidered as atrocious, and as liable to the ſevereſt puniſhment. Thus if, by the imprudent action above mentioned, he ſhould accidentally kill a man, he is, by the laws of many countries, particularly by the old law of Scotland, liable to the laſt puniſhment. And though this is, no doubt, exceſ-

* Lata culpa prope dolum eſt.

ſively

ſively ſevere, it is not altogether inconſiſtent with our natural ſentiments. Our juſt indignation againſt the folly and inhumanity of his conduct is exaſperated by our ſympathy with the unfortunate ſufferer. Nothing, however, would appear more ſhocking to our natural ſenſe of equity, than to bring a man to the ſcaffold merely for having thrown a ſtone careleſsly into the ſtreet without hurting any body. The folly and inhumanity of his conduct, however, would in this caſe be the ſame; but ſtill our ſentiments would be very different. The conſideration of this difference may ſatisfy us how much the indignation even of the ſpectator, is apt to be animated by the actual conſequences of the action. In caſes of this kind there will, if I am not miſtaken, be found a great degree of ſeverity in the laws of almoſt all nations; as I have already obſerved, that in thoſe of an oppoſite kind there was a very general relaxation of diſcipline.

There is another degree of negligence which does not involve in it any ſort of injuſtice. The perſon who is guilty of it treats his neighbour as he treats himſelf, means no harm to any body, and is far from entertaining any inſolent contempt for the ſafety and happineſs of others. He is not, how-

ever, ſo careful and circumſpect in his conduct as he ought to be, and deſerves upon this account ſome degree of blame and cenſure, but no ſort of puniſhment. Yet if, by a negligence * of this kind, he ſhould occaſion ſome damage to another perſon, he is by the laws of, I believe, all countries, obliged to compenſate it. And though this is, no doubt, a real puniſhment, and what no mortal would have thought of inflicting upon him, had it not been for the unlucky accident which his conduct gave occaſion to; yet this deciſion of the law is approved of by the natural ſentiments of all mankind. Nothing, we think, can be more juſt than that one man ſhould not ſuffer by the careleſſneſs of another; and that the damage occaſioned by blamable negligence, ſhould be made up by the perſon who is guilty of it.

There is another ſpecies of negligence †, which conſiſts merely in a want of the moſt anxious timidity and circumſpection, with regard to all the poſſible conſequences of our actions. The want of this painful attention, when no bad conſequences follow from it, is ſo far from being regarded as blamable, that the contrary quality is rather conſidered as ſuch.

* Culpa levis. † Culpa leviſſima.

That

That timid circumſpection which is afraid of every thing, is never regarded as a virtue, but as a quality which more than any other incapacitates for action and buſineſs. Yet when, from a want of this exceſſive care, a perſon happens to occaſion ſome damage to another, he is often by the law obliged to compenſate it. Thus, by the Aquilian law, the man, who not being able to manage a horſe that had accidentally taken fright, ſhould happen to ride down his neighbour's ſlave, is obliged to compenſate the damage. When an accident of this kind happens, we are apt to think that he ought not to have rode ſuch a horſe, and to regard his attempting it as an unpardonable levity; though without this accident we ſhould not only have made no ſuch reflection, but ſhould have regarded his refuſing it as the effect of timid weakneſs, and of an anxiety about merely poſſible events, which it is to no purpoſe to be aware of. The perſon himſelf, who by an accident even of this kind has involuntarily hurt another, ſeems to have ſome ſenſe of his own ill deſert, with regard to him. He naturally runs up to the ſufferer to expreſs his concern for what has happened, and to make every acknowledgment in his power. If he has any ſenſibility, he neceſſarily deſires

to compenſate the damage, and to do every thing he can to appeaſe that animal reſentment, which he is ſenſible will be apt to ariſe in the breaſt of the ſufferer. To make no apology, to offer no atonement, is regarded as the higheſt brutality. Yet why ſhould he make an apology more than any other perſon? Why ſhould he, ſince he was equally innocent, with any other by-ſtander, be thus ſingled out from among all mankind, to make up for the bad fortune of another? This taſk would ſurely never be impoſed upon him, did not even the impartial ſpectator feel ſome indulgence for what may be regarded as the unjuſt reſentment of that other.

CHAP. III.

Of the final cauſe of this Irregularity of Sentiments.

SUCH is the effect of the good or bad conſequence of actions upon the ſentiments both of the perſon who performs them, and of others; and thus, Fortune, which governs the world, has ſome influence where we ſhould

ſhould be leaſt willing to allow her any, and directs in ſome meaſure the ſentiments of mankind, with regard to the character and conduct both of themſelves and others. That the world judges by the event, and not by the deſign, has been in all ages the complaint, and is the great diſcouragement of virtue. Every body agrees to the general maxim, that as the event does not depend on the agent, it ought to have no influence upon our ſentiments with regard to the merit or propriety of his conduct. But when we come to particulars, we find that our ſentiments are ſcarce in any one inſtance exactly conformable to what this equitable maxim would direct. The happy or unproſperous event of any action, is not only apt to give us a good or bad opinion of the prudence with which it was conducted, but almoſt always too animates our gratitude or reſentment, our ſenſe of the merit or demerit of the deſign.

Nature, however, when ſhe implanted the ſeeds of this irregularity in the human breaſt, ſeems, as upon all other occaſions, to have intended the happineſs and perfection of the ſpecies. If the hurtfulneſs of the deſign, if the malevolence of the affection, were alone the cauſes which excited our reſentment, we

ſhould

ſhould feel all the furies of that paſſion againſt any perſon in whoſe breaſt we ſuſpected or believed ſuch deſigns or affections were harboured, though they had never broke out into any actions. Sentiments, thoughts, intentions, would become the objects of puniſhment; and if the indignation of mankind run as high againſt them as againſt actions: if the baſeneſs of the thought which had given birth to no action, ſeemed in the eyes of the world as much to call aloud for vengeance as the baſeneſs of the action, every court of judicature would become a real inquiſition. There would be no ſafety for the moſt innocent and circumſpect conduct. Bad wiſhes, bad views, bad deſigns, might ſtill be ſuſpected; and while theſe excited the ſame indignation with bad conduct, while bad intentions were as much reſented as bad actions, they would equally expoſe the perſon to puniſhment and reſentment. Actions, therefore, which either produce actual evil, or attempt to produce it, and thereby put us in the immediate fear of it, are by the Author of nature rendered the only proper and approved objects of human puniſhment and reſentment. Sentiments, deſigns, affections, though it is from theſe that according to cool reaſon human actions derive their whole

whole merit or demerit, are placed by the great Judge of hearts beyond the limits of every human jurisdiction, and are reserved for the cognizance of his own unerring tribunal. That necessary rule of justice, therefore, that men in this life are liable to punishment for their actions only, not for their designs and intentions, is founded upon this salutary and useful irregularity in human sentiments concerning merit or demerit, which at first sight appears so absurd and unaccountable. But every part of nature, when attentively surveyed, equally demonstrates the providential care of its Author; and we may admire the wisdom and goodness of God even in the weakness and folly of men.

Nor is that irregularity of sentiments altogether without its utility, by which the merit of an unsuccessful attempt to serve, and much more that of mere good inclinations and kind wishes, appears to be imperfect. Man was made for action, and to promote by the exertion of his faculties such changes in the external circumstances both of himself and others, as may seem most favourable to the happiness of all. He must not be satisfied with indolent benevolence, nor fancy himself the friend of mankind, because in his heart he wishes well to the prosperity of the world.

That

That he may call forth the whole vigour of his ſoul, and ſtrain every nerve, in order to produce thoſe ends which it is the purpoſe of his being to advance, Nature has taught him, that neither himſelf nor mankind can be fully ſatisfied with his conduct, nor beſtow upon it the full meaſure of applauſe, unleſs he has actually produced them. He is made to know, that the praiſe of good intentions, without the merit of good offices, will be but of little avail to excite either the loudeſt acclamations of the world, or even the higheſt degree of ſelf-applauſe. The man who has performed no ſingle action of importance, but whoſe whole converſation and deportment expreſs the juſteſt, the nobleſt, and moſt generous ſentiments, can be entitled to demand no very high reward, even though his inutility ſhould be owing to nothing but the want of an opportunity to ſerve. We can ſtill refuſe it him without blame. We can ſtill aſk him, What have you done? What actual ſervice can you produce, to entitle you to ſo great a recompenſe? We eſteem you and love you; but we owe you nothing. To reward indeed that latent virtue which has been uſeleſs only for want of an opportunity to ſerve, to beſtow upon it thoſe honours and preferments, which, though in

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ſome meaſure it may be ſaid to deſerve them, it could not with propriety have inſiſted upon, is the effect of the moſt divine benevolence. To puniſh, on the contrary, for the affections of the heart only, where no crime has been committed, is the moſt inſolent and barbarous tyranny. The benevolent affections ſeem to deſerve moſt praiſe, when they do not wait till it becomes almoſt a crime for them not to exert themſelves. The malevolent, on the contrary, can ſcarce be too tardy, too ſlow, or deliberate.

It is even of conſiderable importance, that the evil which is done without deſign ſhould be regarded as a misfortune to the doer as well as to the ſufferer. Man is thereby taught to reverence the happineſs of his brethren, to tremble leſt he ſhould, even unknowingly, do any thing that can hurt them, and to dread that animal reſentment which, he feels, is ready to burſt out againſt him, if he ſhould, without deſign, be the unhappy inſtrument of their calamity. As, in the ancient heathen religion, that holy ground which had been conſecrated to ſome god, was not to be trod upon but upon ſolemn and neceſſary occaſions, and the men who had even ignorantly violated it, became piacular from that moment, and, until proper atonement

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ſhould be made, incurred the vengeance of that powerful and inviſible being to whom it had been ſet apart; ſo, by the wiſdom of Nature, the happineſs of every innocent man is, in the ſame manner rendered holy, conſecrated, and hedged round againſt the approach of every other man; not to be wantonly trod upon, not even to be, in any reſpect, ignorantly and involuntarily violated, without requiring ſome expiation, ſome atonement in proportion to the greatneſs of ſuch undeſigned violation. A man of humanity, who accidentally, and without the ſmalleſt degree of blamable negligence, has been the cauſe of the death of another man, feels himſelf piacular, though not guilty. During his whole life he conſiders this accident as one of the greateſt misfortunes that could have befallen him. If the family of the ſlain is poor, and he himſelf in tolerable circumſtances, he immediately takes them under his protection, and without any other merit, thinks them entitled to every degree of favour and kindneſs. If they are in better circumſtances he endeavours by every ſubmiſſion, by every expreſſion of ſorrow, by rendering them every good office which he can deviſe or they accept of, to atone for what has happened, and to propitiate as much

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as poſſible, their, perhaps natural, though no doubt moſt unjuſt reſentment for the great, though involuntarily, offence which he has given them.

The diſtreſs which an innocent perſon feels, who, by ſome accident, has been led to do ſomething which, if it had been done with knowledge and deſign, would have juſtly expoſed him to the deepeſt reproach, has given occaſion to ſome of the fineſt and moſt intereſting ſcenes both of the ancient and of the modern drama. It is this fallacious ſenſe of guilt, if I may call it ſo, which conſtitutes the whole diſtreſs of Oedipus and Jocaſta upon the Greek, of Monimia and Iſabella upon the Engliſh, theatre. They are all of them in the higheſt degree piacular, though not one of them is in the ſmalleſt degree guilty.

Notwithſtanding, however, all theſe ſeeming irregularities of ſentiment, if man ſhould unfortunately either give occaſion to thoſe evils which he did not intend, or fail in producing that good which he intended, Nature has not left his innocence altogether without conſolation, nor his virtue altogether without reward. He then calls to his aſſiſtance that juſt and equitable maxim, That thoſe events which did not depend upon our conduct,

ought not to diminiſh the eſteem that is due to us. He ſummons up his whole magnanimity and firmneſs of ſoul, and ſtrives to regard himſelf, not in the light in which he at preſent appears, but in that in which he ought to appear, in which he would have appeared had his generous deſigns been crowned with ſucceſs, and in which he would ſtill appear, notwithſtanding their miſcarriage, if the ſentiments of mankind were either altogether candid and equitable, or even perfectly conſiſtent with themſelves. The more candid and humane part of mankind entirely go along with the efforts which he thus makes to ſupport himſelf in his own opinion. They exert their whole generoſity and greatneſs of mind, to correct in themſelves this irregularity of human nature, and endeavour to regard his unfortunate magnanimity in the ſame light in which, had it been ſucceſsful, they would, without any ſuch generous exertion, have naturally been diſpoſed to conſider it.

THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART III.

Of the Foundation of our Judgments concerning our own Sentiments and Conduct, and of the Senſe of Duty.

CHAP. I.

Of the Principle of Self-approbation and of Self-diſapprobation.

IN the two foregoing parts of this diſcourſe, I have chiefly conſidered the origin and foundation of our judgments concerning the ſentiments and conduct of others. I come now to conſider more particularly the origin of thoſe concerning our own.

The principle by which we naturally either approve or disapprove of our own conduct seems to be altogether the same with that by which we exercise the like judgments concerning the conduct of other people. We either approve or disapprove of the conduct of another man according as we feel that, when we bring his case home to ourselves, we either can or cannot entirely sympathize with the sentiments and motives which directed it. And, in the same manner, we either approve or disapprove of our own conduct, according as we feel that, when we place ourselves in the situation of another man, and view it, as it were, with his eyes, and from his station, we either can or cannot entirely enter into and sympathize with the sentiments and motives which influenced it. We can never survey our own sentiments and motives, we can never form any judgment concerning them; unless we remove ourselves, as it were, from our own natural station, and endeavour to view them as at a certain distance from us. But we can do this in no other way than by endeavouring to view them with the eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them. Whatever judgment we can form concerning them, accordingly, must always bear some

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ſecret reference, either to what are, or to what, upon a certain condition, would be, or to what, we imagine, ought to be the judgment of others. We endeavour to examine our own conduct as we imagine any other fair and impartial ſpectator would examine it. If, upon placing ourſelves in his ſituation, we thoroughly enter into all the paſſions and motives which influenced it, we approve of it, by ſympathy with the approbation of this ſuppoſed equitable judge. If otherwiſe, we enter into his diſapprobation, and condemn it.

Were it poſſible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in ſome ſolitary place, without any communication with his own ſpecies, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own ſentiments and conduct, of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face. All theſe are objects which we cannot eaſily ſee, which naturally he does not look at, and with regard to which he is provided with no mirror which can preſent them to his view. Bring him into ſociety, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before. It is placed in the countenance and behaviour of thoſe he lives with,

which always mark when they enter into, and when they disapprove of his sentiments; and it is here that he first views the propriety and impropriety of his own passions, the beauty and deformity of his own mind. To a man who from his birth was a stranger to society, the objects of his passions, the external bodies which either pleased or hurt him, would occupy his whole attention. The passions themselves, the desires or aversions, the joys or sorrows, which those objects excited, though of all things the most immediately present to him, could scarce ever be the objects of his thoughts. The idea of them could never interest him so much as to call upon his attentive consideration. The consideration of his joy could in him excite no new joy, nor that of his sorrow any new sorrow, though the consideration of the causes of those passions might often excite both. Bring him into society, and all his own passions will immediately become the causes of new passions. He will observe that mankind approve of some of them, and are disgusted by others. He will be elevated in the one case, and cast down in the other; his desires and aversions, his joys and sorrows, will now often become the causes of new desires and new aversions, new joys and new sorrows:

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they will now, therefore, intereſt him deeply, and often call upon his moſt attentive conſideration.

Our firſt ideas of perſonal beauty and deformity, are drawn from the ſhape and appearance of others, not from our own. We ſoon become ſenſible, however, that others exerciſe the ſame criticiſm upon us. We are pleaſed when they approve of our figure, and are diſobliged when they ſeem to be diſguſted. We become anxious to know how far our appearance deſerves either their blame or approbation. We examine our perſons limb by limb, and by placing ourſelves before a looking-glaſs, or by ſome ſuch expedient, endeavour, as much as poſſible, to view ourſelves at the diſtance and with the eyes of other people. If, after this examination, we are ſatisfied with our own appearance, we can more eaſily ſupport the moſt diſadvantageous judgments of others. If on the contrary, we are ſenſible that we are the natural objects of diſtaſte, every appearance of their diſapprobation mortifies us beyond all meaſure. A man who is tolerably handſome, will allow you to laugh at any little irregularity in his perſon; but all ſuch jokes are commonly unſupportable to one who is really deformed. It is evident, how-

ever, that we are anxious about our own beauty and deformity, only upon account of its effect upon others. If we had no connexion with ſociety, we ſhould be altogether indifferent about either.

In the ſame manner our firſt moral criticiſms are exerciſed upon the characters and conduct of other people; and we are all very forward to obſerve how each of theſe affects us. But we ſoon learn, that other people are equally frank with regard to our own. We become anxious to know how far we deſerve their cenſure or applauſe, and whether to them we muſt neceſſarily appear thoſe agreeable or diſagreeable creatures which they repreſent us. We begin, upon this account, to examine our own paſſions and conduct, and to conſider how theſe muſt appear to them, by conſidering how they would appear to us if in their ſituation. We ſuppoſe ourſelves the ſpectators of our own behaviour, and endeavour to imagine what effect it would, in this light, produce upon us. This is the only looking-glaſs by which we can, in ſome meaſure, with the eyes of other people ſcrutinize the propriety of our own conduct. If in this view it pleaſes us, we are tolerably ſatisfied. We can be more indifferent about the applauſe, and, in ſome meaſure, deſpiſe the cenſure

cenſure of the world; ſecure that, however miſunderſtood or miſrepreſented, we are the natural and proper objects of approbation. On the contrary, if we are doubtful about it, we are often upon that very account, more anxious to gain their approbation, and provided we have not already, as they ſay, ſhaken hands with infamy, we are altogether diſtracted at the thoughts of their cenſure, which then ſtrikes us with double ſeverity.

When I endeavour to examine my own conduct, when I endeavour to paſs ſentence upon it, and either to approve or condemn it, it is evident that, in all ſuch caſes, I divide myſelf, as it were, into two perſons; and that I, the examiner and judge, repreſent a different character from that other I, the perſon whoſe conduct is examined into, and judged of. The firſt is the ſpectator, whoſe ſentiments with regard to my own conduct I endeavour to enter into, by placing myſelf in his ſituation, and by conſidering how it would appear to me, when ſeen from that particular point of view. The ſecond is the agent, the perſon whom I properly call myſelf, and of whoſe conduct, under the character of a ſpectator, I was endeavouring to form ſome opinion. The firſt is the judge; the ſecond the perſon judged of. But that

the judge ſhould, in every reſpect, be the ſame with the perſon judged of, is as impoſſible, as that the cauſe ſhould, in every reſpect, be the ſame with the effect.

To be amiable and to be meritorious; that is, to deſerve love and to deſerve reward, are the great characters of virtue; and to be odious and puniſhable, of vice. But all theſe characters have an immediate reference to the ſentiments of others. Virtue is not ſaid to be amiable or to be meritorious, becauſe it is the object of its own love, or of its own gratitude; but becauſe it excites thoſe ſentiments in other men. The conſciouſneſs that it is the object of ſuch favourable regards, is the ſource of that inward tranquillity and ſelf-ſatisfaction with which it is naturally attended, as the ſuſpicion of the contrary gives occaſion to the torments of vice. What ſo great happineſs as to be beloved, and to know that we deſerve to be beloved? What ſo great miſery as to be hated, and to know that we deſerve to be hated?

CHAP. II.

Of the love of Praiſe, and of that of Praiſe-worthineſs; and of the dread of Blame, and of that of Blame-worthineſs.

MAN naturally deſires, not only to be loved, but to be lovely; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of love. He naturally dreads, not only to be hated, but to be hateful; or to be that thing which is the natural and proper object of hatred. He deſires not only praiſe, but praiſe-worthineſs; or to be that thing which, though it ſhould be praiſed by nobody, is, however, the natural and proper object of praiſe. He dreads, not only blame, but blame-worthineſs; or to be that thing, which, though it ſhould be blamed by nobody, is, however, the natural and proper object of blame.

The love of praiſe-worthineſs is by no means derived altogether from the love of praiſe. Thoſe two principles, though they reſemble one another, though they are connected,

nected, and often blended with one another, are yet, in many respects, distinct and independent of one another.

The love and admiration which we naturally conceive for those whose character and conduct we approve of, necessarily dispose us to desire to become ourselves the objects of the like agreeable sentiments, and to be as amiable and as admirable as those whom we love and admire the most. Emulation, the anxious desire that we ourselves should excel, is originally founded in our admiration of the excellence of others. Neither can we be satisfied with being merely admired for what other people are admired. We must at least believe ourselves to be admirable for what they are admirable. But, in order to attain this satisfaction, we must become the impartial spectators of our own character and conduct. We must endeavour to view them with the eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them. When seen in this light, if they appear to us as we wish, we are happy and contented. But it greatly confirms this happiness and contentment when we find that other people, viewing them with those very eyes with which we, in imagination only, were endeavouring to view them, see them precisely in the same light

light in which we ourſelves had ſeen them. Their approbation neceſſarily confirms our own ſelf-approbation. Their praiſe neceſſarily ſtrengthens our own ſenſe of our own praiſe-worthineſs. In this caſe ſo far is the love of praiſe-worthineſs from being derived altogether from that of praiſe; that the love of praiſe ſeems, at leaſt in a great meaſure, to be derived from that of praiſe-worthineſs.

The moſt ſincere praiſe can give little pleaſure when it cannot be conſidered as ſome ſort of proof of praiſe-worthineſs. It is by no means ſufficient, that from ignorance or miſtake, eſteem and admiration ſhould in ſome way or other be beſtowed upon us. If we are conſcious that we do not deſerve to be ſo favourably thought of, and that if the truth were known we ſhould be regarded with very different ſentiments, our ſatisfaction is far from being complete. The man who applauds us either for actions which we did not perform, or for motives which had no ſort of influence upon our conduct, applauds not us, but another perſon. We can derive no ſort of ſatisfaction from his praiſes. To us they ſhould be more mortifying than any cenſure, and ſhould perpetually call to our minds the moſt humbling of all reflections, the reflection of what we ought to be, but

what

what we are not. A woman who paints could derive, one ſhould imagine, but little vanity from the compliments that are paid to her complexion. Theſe, we ſhould expect, ought rather to put her in mind of the ſentiments which her real complexion would excite, and mortify her the more by the contraſt. To be pleaſed with ſuch groundleſs applauſe is a proof of the moſt ſuperficial levity and weakneſs. It is what is properly called vanity, and is the foundation of the moſt ridiculous and contemptible vices, the vices of affectation and common lying; follies, which, if experience did not teach us how common they are, one ſhould imagine the leaſt ſpark of common ſenſe would ſave us from. The fooliſh liar who endeavours to excite the admiration of the company, by the relation of adventures which never had any exiſtence; the important coxcomb, who gives himſelf airs of rank and diſtinction which he well knows he has no juſt pretenſions to; are both of them, no doubt, pleaſed with the applauſe which they fancy they meet with. But their vanity ariſes from ſo groſs an illuſion of the imagination that it is difficult to conceive how any rational creature ſhould be impoſed upon by it. When they place themſelves in the ſituation of thoſe

whom they fancy they have deceived, they are ſtruck with the higheſt admiration for their own perſons. They look upon themſelves, not in that light in which, they know, they ought to appear to their companions, but in that which they believe their companions actually look upon them. Their ſuperficial weakneſs and trivial folly hinder them from ever turning their eyes inwards, or from ſeeing themſelves in that deſpicable point of view in which their own conſciences muſt tell them that they would appear to every body, if the real truth ſhould ever come to be known.

As ignorant and groundleſs praiſe can give no ſolid joy, no ſatisfaction, that will bear any ſerious examination; ſo on the contrary, it often gives real comfort to reflect, that though no praiſe ſhould actually be beſtowed upon us, our conduct, however, has been ſuch as to deſerve it, and has been in every reſpect ſuitable to thoſe meaſures and rules by which praiſe and approbation are naturally and commonly beſtowed. We are pleaſed not only with praiſe, but with having done what is praiſe-worthy. We are pleaſed to think that we have rendered ourſelves the natural objects of approbation, though no approbation ſhould ever actually be

be beſtowed upon us: and we are mortified to reflect that we have juſtly merited the blame of thoſe we live with, though that ſentiment ſhould never actually be exerted againſt us. The man who is conſcious to himſelf that he has exactly obſerved thoſe meaſures of conduct which experience informs him are generally agreeable, reflects with ſatisfaction on the propriety of his own behaviour. When he views it in the light in which the impartial ſpectator would view it, he thoroughly enters into all the motives which influenced it. He looks back upon every part of it, with pleaſure and approbation, and though mankind ſhould never be acquainted with what he has done, he regards himſelf not ſo much according to the light in which they actually regard him, as according to that in which they would regard him if they were better informed. He anticipates the applauſe and admiration which in this caſe would be beſtowed upon him, and he applauds and admires himſelf by ſympathy with ſentiments, which do not indeed actually take place, but which the ignorance of the public alone hinders from taking place, which he knows are the natural and ordinary effects of ſuch conduct, which his imagination ſtrongly connects with it,

and

and which he has acquired a habit of conceiving as ſomething that naturally and in propriety ought to follow from it. Men have voluntarily thrown away life to acquire after death a renown which they could no longer enjoy. Their imagination, in the mean time, anticipated that fame which was in future times to be beſtowed upon them. Thoſe applauſes which they were never to hear rung in their ears; the thoughts of that admiration, whoſe effects they were never to feel, played about their hearts, baniſhed from their breaſts the ſtrongeſt of all natural fears, and tranſported them to perform actions which ſeem almoſt beyond the reach of human nature. But in point of reality there is ſurely no great difference between that approbation which is not to be beſtowed till we can no longer enjoy it, and that which, indeed, is never to be beſtowed, but which, would be beſtowed, if the world was ever made to underſtand properly the real circumſtances of our behaviour. If the one often produces ſuch violent effects, we cannot wonder that the other ſhould always be highly regarded.

Nature, when ſhe formed man for ſociety, endowed him with an original deſire to pleaſe, and an original averſion to offend his brethren.

brethren. She taught him to feel pleaſure in their favourable, and pain in their unfavourable regard. She rendered their approbation moſt flattering and moſt agreeable to him for its own ſake; and their diſapprobation, moſt mortifying and moſt offenſive.

But this deſire of the approbation, and this averſion to the diſapprobation of his brethren would not alone have rendered him fit for that ſociety for which he was made. Nature, accordingly has endowed him not only with a deſire of being approved of, but with a deſire of being what ought to be approved of; or of being what he himſelf approves of in other men. The firſt deſire could only have made him wiſh to appear to be fit for ſociety. The ſecond was neceſſary in order to render him anxious to be really fit. The firſt could only have prompted him to the affectation of virtue, and to the concealment of vice. The ſecond was neceſſary in order to inſpire him with the real love of virtue, and with the real abhorrence of vice. In every well-informed mind this ſecond deſire ſeems to be the ſtrongeſt of the two. It is only the weakeſt and moſt ſuperficial of mankind who can be much delighted with that praiſe which they themſelves know to be altogether unmerited. A weak man may ſometimes be

pleaſed

pleaſed with it, but a wiſe man rejects it upon all occaſions. But, though a wiſe man feels little pleaſure from praiſe where he knows there is no praiſe-worthineſs, he often feels the higheſt in doing what he knows to be praiſe-worthy, though he knows equally well that no praiſe is ever to be beſtowed upon it. To obtain the approbation of mankind, where no approbation is due, can never be an object of any importance to him. To obtain that approbation where it is really due, may ſometimes be an object of no great importance to him. But to be that thing which deſerves approbation, muſt always be an object of the higheſt.

To deſire or even to accept of praiſe, where no praiſe is due, can be the effect only of the moſt contemptible vanity. To deſire it where it is really due, is to deſire no more than that a moſt eſſential act of juſtice ſhould be done to us. The love of juſt fame, of true glory, even for its own ſake, and independent of any advantage which he can derive from it, is not unworthy even of a wiſe man. He ſometimes, however, neglects, and even deſpiſes it; and he is never more apt to do ſo than when he has the moſt perfect aſſurance of the perfect propriety of every part of his own conduct. His ſelf-approbation, in this

caſe, ſtands in need of no confirmation from the approbation of other men. It is alone ſufficient, and he is contented with it. This ſelf-approbation, if not the only, is at leaſt the principal object, about which he can or ought to be anxious. The love of it, is the love of virtue.

As the love and admiration which we naturally conceive for ſome characters, diſpoſe us to wiſh to become ourſelves the proper objects of ſuch agreeable ſentiments; ſo the hatred and contempt which we as naturally conceive for others, diſpoſe us, perhaps ſtill more ſtrongly, to dread the very thought of reſembling them in any reſpect. Neither is it, in this caſe too, ſo much the thought of being hated and deſpiſed that we are afraid of, as that of being hateful and diſpicable. We dread the thought of doing any thing which can render us the juſt and proper objects of the hatred and contempt of our fellow-creatures; even though we had the moſt perfect ſecurity that thoſe ſentiments were never actually to be exerted againſt us. The man who has broke through all thoſe meaſures of conduct, which can alone render him agreeable to mankind, though he ſhould have the moſt perfect aſſurance that what he had done was for ever to be concealed from every human

man eye, it is all to no purpoſe. When he looks back upon it, and views it in the light in which the impartial ſpectator would view it, he finds that he can enter into none of the motives which influenced it. He is abaſhed and confounded at the thoughts of it, and neceſſarily feels a very high degree of that ſhame which he would be expoſed to, if his actions ſhould ever come to be generally known. His imagination, in this caſe too, anticipates the contempt and deriſion from which nothing ſaves him but the ignorance of thoſe he lives with. He ſtill feels that he is the natural object of theſe ſentiments, and ſtill trembles at the thought of what he would ſuffer, if they were ever actually exerted againſt him. But if what he had been guilty of was not merely one of thoſe improprieties which are the objects of ſimple diſapprobation, but one of thoſe enormous crimes which excite deteſtation and reſentment, he could never think of it, as long as he had any ſenſibility left, without feeling all the agony of horror and remorſe; and though he could be aſſured that no man was ever to know it, and could even bring himſelf to believe that there was no God to revenge it, he would ſtill feel enough of both theſe ſentiments to embitter the whole of his life: he would ſtill regard

himſelf as the natural object of the hatred and indignation of all his fellow-creatures; and if his heart was not grown callous by the habit of crimes, he could not think without terror and aſtoniſhment even of the manner in which mankind would look upon him, of what would be the expreſſion of their countenance and of their eyes, if the dreadful truth ſhould ever come to be known. Theſe natural pangs of an affrighted conſcience are the dæmons, the avenging furies, which, in this life, haunt the guilty, which allow them neither quiet nor repoſe, which often drive them to deſpair and diſtraction, from which no aſſurance of ſecrecy can protect them, from which no principle of irreligion can entirely deliver them, and from which nothing can free them but the vileſt and moſt abject of all ſtates, a complete inſenſibility to honour and infamy, to vice and virtue. Men of the moſt deteſtable characters, who, in the execution of the moſt dreadful crimes, had taken their meaſures ſo coolly as to avoid even the ſuſpicion of guilt, have ſometimes been driven, by the horror of their ſituation, to diſcover, of their own accord, what no human ſagacity could ever have inveſtigated. By acknowledging their guilt, by ſubmitting themſelves to the reſentment of their offended

fellow-

fellow-citizens, and, by thus ſatiating that vengeance of which they were ſenſible that they had become the proper objects, they hoped, by their death to reconcile themſelves, at leaſt in their own imagination, to the natural ſentiments of mankind; to be able to conſider themſelves as leſs worthy of hatred and reſentment; to atone in ſome meaſure for their crimes, and, by thus becoming the objects, rather of compaſſion than of horror, if poſſible to die in peace and with the forgiveneſs of all their fellow-creatures. Compared to what they felt before the diſcovery, even the thought of this, it ſeems, was happineſs.

In ſuch caſes, the horror of blame-worthineſs ſeems, even in perſons who cannot be ſuſpected of any extraordinary delicacy or ſenſibility of character, completely to conquer the dread of blame. In order to allay that horror, in order to pacify, in ſome degree, the remorſe of their own conſciences, they voluntarily ſubmitted themſelves both to the reproach and to the puniſhment which they knew were due to their crimes, but which, at the ſame time, they might eaſily have avoided.

They are the moſt frivolous and ſuperficial of mankind only who can be much delighted with that praiſe which they them-

ſelves know to be altogether unmerited. Unmerited reproach, however, is frequently capable of mortifying very ſeverely even men of more than ordinary conſtancy. Men of the moſt ordinary conſtancy, indeed, eaſily learn to deſpiſe thoſe fooliſh tales which are ſo frequently circulated in ſociety, and which, from their own abſurdity and falſehood, never fail to die away in the courſe of a few weeks, or of a few days. But an innocent man, though of a more than ordinary conſtancy, is often not only ſhocked, but moſt ſeverely mortified by the ſerious, though falſe, imputation of a crime; eſpecially when that imputation happens unfortunately to be ſupported by ſome circumſtances which give it an air of probability. He is humbled to find that any body ſhould think ſo meanly of his character as to ſuppoſe him capable of being guilty of it. Though perfectly conſcious of his own innocence, the very imputation ſeems often, even in his own imagination, to throw a ſhadow of diſgrace and diſhonour upon his character. His juſt indignation, too, at ſo very groſs an injury, which, however, it may frequently be improper, and ſometimes even impoſſible to revenge, is itſelf a very painful ſenſation. There is no greater tormentor of the human

breaſt

breaſt than violent reſentment which cannot be gratified. An innocent man, brought to the ſcaffold by the falſe imputation of an infamous or odious crime, ſuffers the moſt cruel misfortune which it is poſſible for innocence to ſuffer. The agony of his mind may, in this caſe, frequently be greater than that of thoſe who ſuffer for the like crimes, of which they have been actually guilty. Profligate criminals ſuch as common thieves and highwaymen, have frequenty little ſenſe of the baſeneſs of their own conduct, and conſequently no remorſe. Without troubling themſelves about the juſtice or injuſtice of the puniſhment, they have always been accuſtomed to look upon the gibbet as a lot very likely to fall to them. When it does fall to them, therefore, they conſider themſelves only as not quite ſo lucky as ſome of their companions, and ſubmit to their fortune, without any other uneaſineſs than what may ariſe from the fear of death; a fear which, even by ſuch worthleſs wretches, we frequently ſee, can be ſo eaſily, and ſo very completely conquered. The innocent man, on the contrary, over and above the uneaſineſs which this fear may occaſion, is tormented by his own indignation at the injuſtice which has been done to him. He is ſtruck with horror at the thoughts of

the infamy which the puniſhment may ſhed upon his memory, and foreſees, with the moſt exquiſite anguiſh, that he is hereafter to be remembered by his deareſt friends and relations, not with regret and affection, but with ſhame, and even with horror for his ſuppoſed diſgraceful conduct: and the ſhades of death appear to cloſe round him with a darker and more melancholy gloom than naturally belongs to them. Such fatal accidents, for the tranquillity of mankind, it is to be hoped, happen very rarely in any country; but they happen ſometimes in all countries, even in thoſe where juſtice is in general very well adminiſtered. The unfortunate Calas, a man of much more than ordinary conſtancy (broke upon the wheel and burnt at Tholouſe for the ſuppoſed murder of his own ſon, of which he was perfectly innocent), ſeemed, with his laſt breath, to deprecate, not ſo much the cruelty of the puniſhment, as the diſgrace which the imputation might bring upon his memory. After he had been broke, and was juſt going to be thrown into the fire, the monk who attended the execution, exhorted him to confeſs the crime for which he had been condemned. My father, ſaid Calas, can you yourſelf bring yourſelf to believe that I am guilty?

To

To perſons in ſuch unfortunate circumſtances, that humble philoſophy which confines its views to this life, can afford, perhaps, but little conſolation. Every thing that could render either life or death reſpectable is taken from them. They are condemned to death and to everlaſting infamy. Religion can alone afford them any effectual comfort. She alone can tell them, that it is of little importance what man may think of their conduct, while the all-ſeeing Judge of the world approves of it. She alone can preſent to them the view of another world; a world of more candour, humanity, and juſtice, than the preſent; where their innocence is in due time to be declared, and their virtue to be finally rewarded: and the ſame great principle which can alone ſtrike terror into triumphant vice, affords the only effectual conſolation to diſgraced and inſulted innocence.

In ſmaller offences, as well as in greater crimes, it frequently happens that a perſon of ſenſibility is much more hurt by the unjuſt imputation, than the real criminal is by the actual guilt. A woman of gallantry laughs even at the well-founded ſurmiſes which are circulated concerning her conduct. The worſt founded ſurmiſe of the ſame kind is a

mortal

mortal ſtab to an innocent virgin. The perſon who is deliberately guilty of a diſgraceful action, we may lay it down, I believe, as a general rule, can ſeldom have much ſenſe of the diſgrace; and the perſon who is habitually guilty of it, can ſcarce ever have any.

When every man, even of middling underſtanding, ſo readily deſpiſes unmerited applauſe, how it comes to paſs that unmerited reproach ſhould often be capable of mortifying ſo ſeverely men of the ſoundeſt and beſt judgment, may, perhaps, deſerve ſome conſideration.

Pain, I have already had occaſion to obſerve, is, in almoſt all caſes, a more pungent ſenſation than the oppoſite and correſpondent pleaſure. The one, almoſt always, depreſſes us much more below the ordinary, or what may be called the natural ſtate of our happineſs, than the other ever raiſes us above it. A man of ſenſibility is apt to be more humiliated by juſt cenſure than he is ever elevated by juſt applauſe. Unmerited applauſe a wiſe man rejects with contempt upon all occaſions; but he often feels very ſeverely the injuſtice of unmerited cenſure. By ſuffering himſelf to be applauded for what he has not performed, by aſſuming a merit which does not belong to him, he feels that he is guilty

of

of a mean falſehood, and deſerves, not the admiration, but the contempt of thoſe very perſons who, by miſtake, had been led to admire him. It may, perhaps, give him ſome well-founded pleaſure to find that he has been, by many people, thought capable of performing what he did not perform. But, though he may be obliged to his friends for their good opinion he would think himſelf guilty of the greateſt baſeneſs if he did not immediately undeceive them. It gives him little pleaſure to look upon himſelf in the light in which other people actually look upon him, when he is conſcious that, if they knew the truth, they would look upon him in a very different light. A weak man, however, is often much delighted with viewing himſelf in this falſe and deluſive light. He aſſumes the merit of every laudable action that is aſcribed to him, and pretends to that of many which nobody ever thought of aſcribing to him. He pretends to have done what he never did, to have written what another wrote, to have invented what another diſcovered; and is led into all the miſerable vices of plagiariſm and common lying. But though no man of middling good ſenſe can derive much pleaſure from the imputation of a laudable action which he never performed,

yet

yet a wife man may ſuffer great pain from the ſerious imputation of a crime which he never committed. Nature, in this caſe, has rendered the pain, not only more pungent than the oppoſite and correſpondent pleaſure, but ſhe has rendered it ſo in a much greater than the ordinary degree. A denial rids a man at once of the fooliſh and ridiculous pleaſure; but it will not always rid him of the pain. When he refuſes the merit which is aſcribed to him, nobody doubts his veracity. It may be doubted when he denies the crime which he is accuſed of. He is at once enraged at the falſehood of the imputation, and mortified to find that any credit ſhould be given to it. He feels that his character is not ſufficient to protect him. He feels that his brethren, far from looking upon him in that light in which he anxiouſly deſires to be viewed by them, think him capable of being guilty of what he is accuſed of. He knows perfectly that he has not been guilty. He knows perfectly what he has done; but perhaps, ſcarce any man can know perfectly what he himſelf is capable of doing. What the peculiar conſtitution of his own mind may or may not admit of, is, perhaps, more or leſs a matter of doubt to every man. The truſt and good opinion of his friends and neighbours, tend

more

more than any thing to relieve him from this moſt diſagreeable doubt; their diſtruſt and unfavourable opinion to increaſe it. He may think himſelf very confident that their unfavourable judgment is wrong: but this confidence can ſeldom be ſo great as to hinder that judgment from making ſome impreſſion upon him; and the greater his ſenſibility, the greater his delicacy, the greater his worth in ſhort, this impreſſion is likely to be the greater.

The agreement or diſagreement both of the ſentiments and judgments of other people with our own, is, in all caſes, it muſt be obſerved, of more or leſs importance to us, exactly in proportion as we ourſelves are more or leſs uncertain about the propriety of our own ſentiments, about the accuracy of our own judgments.

A man of ſenſibility may ſometimes feel great uneaſineſs leſt he ſhould have yielded too much even to what may be called an honourable paſſion; to his juſt indignation, perhaps, at the injury which may have been done either to himſelf or to his friend. He is anxiouſly afraid leſt, meaning only to act with ſpirit, and to do juſtice, he may, from the too great vehemence of his emotion, have done a real injury to ſome other perſon; who,

who, though not innocent, may not have been altogether ſo guilty as he at firſt apprehended. The opinion of other people becomes, in this caſe, of the utmoſt importance to him. Their approbation is the moſt healing balſam; their diſapprobation, the bittereſt and moſt tormenting poiſon that can be poured into his uneaſy mind. When he is perfectly ſatisfied with every part of his own conduct, the judgment of other people is often of leſs importance to him.

There are ſome very noble and beautiful arts, in which the degree of excellence can be determined only by a certain nicety of taſte, of which the deciſions, however, appear always, in ſome meaſure uncertain. There are others, in which the ſucceſs admits, either of clear demonſtration, or very ſatisfactory proof. Among the candidates for excellence in thoſe different arts, the anxiety about the public opinion is always much greater in the former than in the latter.

The beauty of poetry is a matter of ſuch nicety, that a young beginner can ſcarce ever be certain that he has attained it. Nothing delights him ſo much, therefore, as the favourable judgments of his friends and of the public; and nothing mortifies him ſo ſeverely as the contrary. The one eſtabliſhes, the other

other ſhakes, the good opinion which he is anxious to entertain concerning his own performances. Experience and ſucceſs may in time give him a little more confidence in his own judgment. He is at all times, however, liable to be moſt ſeverely mortified by the unfavourable judgments of the public. Racine was ſo diſguſted by the indifferent ſucceſs of his Phædra, the fineſt tragedy, perhaps, that is extant in any language, that, though in the vigour of his life, and at the height of his abilities, he reſolved to write no more for the ſtage. That great poet uſed frequently to tell his ſon that the moſt paltry and impertinent criticiſm had always given him more pain than the higheſt and juſteſt eulogy had ever given him pleaſure. The extreme ſenſibility of Voltaire to the ſlighteſt cenſure of the ſame kind is well known to every body. The Dunciad of Mr. Pope is an everlaſting monument of how much the moſt correct, as well as the moſt elegant and harmonious of all the Engliſh poets, had been hurt by the criticiſms of the loweſt and moſt contemptible authors. Gray (who joins to the ſublimity of Milton the elegance and harmony of Pope, and to whom nothing is wanting to render him, perhaps, the firſt poet in the Engliſh language, but to have written

written a little more) is ſaid to have been ſo much hurt by a fooliſh and impertinent parody of two of his fineſt odes, that he never afterwards attempted any conſiderable work. Thoſe men of letters who value themſelves upon what is called fine writing in proſe, approach ſomewhat to the ſenſibility of poets.

Mathematicians on the contrary, who may have the moſt perfect aſſurance, both of the truth and of the importance of their diſcoveries, are frequently very indifferent about the reception which they may meet with from the public. The two greateſt mathematicians that I ever have had the honour to be known to, and, I believe the two greateſt that have lived in my time, Dr. Robert Simpſon of Glaſgow, and Dr. Matthew Stewart of Edinburgh never ſeemed to feel even the ſlighteſt uneaſineſs from the neglect with which the ignorance of the public received ſome of their moſt valuable works. The great work of Sir Iſaac Newton, his *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philoſophy*, I have been told, was for ſeveral years neglected by the public. The tranquillity of that great man, it is probable, never ſuffered, upon that account, the interruption of a ſingle quarter of an hour. Natural philoſophers, in their independency upon the public opinion,

opinion, approach nearly to mathematicians, and, in their judgments concerning the merit of their own diſcoveries and obſervations, enjoy ſome degree of the ſame ſecurity and tranquillity.

The morals of thoſe different claſſes of men of letters are, perhaps, ſometimes ſomewhat affected by this very great difference in their ſituation with regard to the public.

Mathematicians and natural philoſophers, from their independency upon the public opinion, have little temptation to form themſelves into factions and cabals, either for the ſupport of their own reputation, or for the depreſſion of that of their rivals. They are almoſt always men of the moſt amiable ſimplicity of manners, who live in good harmony with one another, are the friends of one another's reputation, enter into no intrigue in order to ſecure the public applauſe, but are pleaſed when their works are approved of, without being either much vexed or very angry when they are neglected.

It is not always the ſame caſe with poets, or with thoſe who value themſelves upon what is called fine writing. They are very apt to divide themſelves into a ſort of literary factions; each cabal being often avowedly

and almoſt always ſecretly, the mortal enemy of the reputation of every other, and employing all the mean arts of intrigue and ſolicitation to preoccupy the public opinion in favour of the works of its own members, and againſt thoſe of its enemies and rivals. In France, Deſpreaux and Racine did not think it below them to ſet themſelves at the head of a literary cabal in order to depreſs the reputation, firſt of Quinault and Perrault, and afterwards of Fontenelle and La Motte, and even to treat the good La Fontaine with a ſpecies of moſt diſreſpectful kindneſs. In England, the amiable Mr. Addiſon did not think it unworthy of his gentle and modeſt character to ſet himſelf at the head of a little cabal of the ſame kind, in order to keep down the riſing reputation of Mr. Pope. Mr. Fontenelle, in writing the lives and characters of the members of the academy of ſciences, a ſociety of mathematicians and natural philoſophers, has frequent opportunities of celebrating the amiable ſimplicity of their manners; a quality which, he obſerves, was ſo univerſal among them as to be characteriſtical, rather of that whole claſs of men of letters, than of any individual. Mr. D'Alembert, in writing the lives and characters of the members of the French aca-

demy, a ſociety of poets and fine writers, or thoſe who are ſuppoſed to be ſuch, ſeems not to have had ſuch frequent opportunities of making any remark of this kind, and nowhere pretends to repreſent this amiable quality as characteriſtical of that claſs of men of letters whom he celebrates.

Our uncertainty concerning our own merit, and our anxiety to think favourably of it, ſhould together naturally enough make us deſirous to know the opinion of other people concerning it; to be more than ordinarily elevated when that opinion is favourable, and to be more than ordinarily mortified when it is otherwiſe: but they ſhould not make us deſirous either of obtaining the favourable, or of avoiding the unfavourable opinion, by intrigue and cabal. When a man has bribed all the judges, the moſt unanimous deciſion of the court, though it may gain him his law-ſuit, cannot give him any aſſurance that he was in the right: and had he carried on his law-ſuit merely to ſatisfy himſelf that he was in the right, he never would have bribed the judges. But though he wiſhed to find himſelf in the right, he wiſhed likewiſe to gain his law-ſuit; and therefore he bribed the judges. If praiſe were of no conſequence to us, but as a proof of our own

praiſe-worthineſs, we never ſhould endeavour to obtain it by unfair means. But, though to wiſe men it is, at leaſt in doubtful caſes, of principal conſequence upon this account; it is likewiſe of ſome conſequence upon its own account: and therefore (we cannot, indeed, upon ſuch occaſions, call them wiſe men, but) men very much above the common level have ſometimes attempted both to obtain praiſe and to avoid blame, by very unfair means.

Praiſe and blame expreſs what actually are; praiſe-worthineſs and blame-worthineſs, what naturally ought to be the ſentiments of other people with regard to our character and conduct. The love of praiſe is the deſire of obtaining the favourable ſentiments of our brethren. The love of praiſe-worthineſs is the deſire of rendering ourſelves the proper objects of thoſe ſentiments. So far thoſe two principles reſemble and are akin to one another. The like affinity and reſemblance take place between the dread of blame and that of blame-worthineſs.

The man who deſires to do, or who actually does, a praiſe-worthy action, may likewiſe deſire the praiſe which is due to it, and ſometimes, perhaps, more than is due to it. The two principles are in this caſe blended together.

together. How far his conduct may have been influenced by the one, and how far by the other, may frequently be unknown even to himself. It must almost always be so to other people. They who are dispoſed to leſſen the merit of his conduct impute it chiefly or altogether to the mere love of praiſe, or to what they call mere vanity. They who are diſpoſed to think more favourably of it, impute it chiefly or altogether to the love of praiſe-worthineſs; to the love of what is really honourable and noble in human conduct; to the deſire not merely of obtaining, but of deſerving the approbation and applauſe of his brethren. The imagination of the ſpectator throws upon it either the one colour or the other, according either to his habits of thinking, or to the favour or diſlike which he may bear to the perſon whoſe conduct he is conſidering.

Some ſplenetic philoſophers, in judging of human nature, have done as peeviſh individuals are apt to do in judging of the conduct of one another, and have imputed to the love of praiſe, or to what they call vanity, every action which ought to be aſcribed to that of praiſe-worthineſs. I ſhall hereafter have occaſion to give an account of ſome of

their ſyſtems, and ſhall not at preſent ſtop to examine them.

Very few men can be ſatisfied with their own private conſciouſneſs that they have attained thoſe qualities, or performed thoſe actions, which they admire and think praiſe-worthy in other people; unleſs it is, at the ſame time, generally acknowledged that they poſſeſs the one, or have performed the other; or, in other words, unleſs they have actually obtained that praiſe which they think due both to the one and to the other. In this reſpect, however, men differ conſiderably from one another. Some ſeem indifferent about the praiſe, when, in their own minds, they are perfectly ſatisfied that they have attained the praiſe-worthineſs. Others appear much leſs anxious about the praiſe-worthineſs than about the praiſe.

No man can be completely, or even tolerably ſatisfied, with having avoided every thing blame-worthy in his conduct; unleſs he has likewiſe avoided the blame or the reproach. A wiſe man may frequently neglect praiſe, even when he has beſt deſerved it; but, in all matters of ſerious conſequence, he will moſt carefully endeavour ſo to regulate his conduct as to avoid, not only blame-worthi-

neſs,

neſs, but, as much as poſſible, every probable imputation of blame. He will never, indeed, avoid blame by doing any thing which he judges blame-worthy; by omitting any part of his duty, or by neglecting any opportunity of doing any thing which he judges to be really and greatly praiſe-worthy. But, with theſe modifications, he will moſt anxiouſly and carefully avoid it. To ſhow much anxiety about praiſe, even for praiſe-worthy actions, is ſeldom a mark of great wiſdom, but generally of ſome degree of weakneſs. But, in being anxious to avoid the ſhadow of blame or reproach, there may be no weakneſs, but frequently the moſt praiſe-worthy prudence.

"Many people," ſays Cicero, "deſpiſe "glory, who are yet more ſeverely mortified "by unjuſt reproach; and that moſt incon-"ſiſtently." This inconſiſtency, however, ſeems to be founded in the unalterable principles of human nature.

The all-wiſe Author of Nature has, in this manner, taught man to reſpect the ſentiments and judgments of his brethren; to be more or leſs pleaſed when they approve of his conduct, and to be more or leſs hurt when they diſapprove of it. He has made man, if I may ſay ſo, the immediate judge of mankind;

and has in this reſpect, as in many others, created him after his own image, and appointed him his vicegerent upon earth, to ſuperintend the behaviour of his brethren. They are taught by nature, to acknowledge that power and juriſdiction which has thus been conferred upon him, to be more or leſs humbled and mortified when they have incurred his cenſure, and to be more or leſs elated when they have obtained his applauſe.

But though man has, in this manner, been rendered the immediate judge of mankind, he has been rendered ſo only in the firſt inſtance; and an appeal lies from his ſentence to a much higher tribunal, to the tribunal of their own conſciences, to that of the ſuppoſed impartial and well-informed ſpectator, to that of the man within the breaſt, the great judge and arbiter of their conduct. The juriſdictions of thoſe two tribunals are founded upon principles which, though in ſome reſpects reſembling and akin, are, however, in reality different and diſtinct. The juriſdiction of the man without, is founded altogether in the deſire of actual praiſe, and in the averſion to actual blame. The juriſdiction of the man within, is founded altogether in the deſire of praiſe-worthineſs; and in the averſion to blame-worthineſs; in the

deſire

desire of possessing those qualities, and performing those actions, which we love and admire in other people; and in the dread of possessing those qualities, and performing those actions, which we hate and despise in other people. If the man without should applaud us, either for actions which we have not performed, or for motives which had no influence upon us; the man within can immediately humble that pride and elevation of mind which such groundless acclamations might otherwise occasion, by telling us, that as we know that we do not deserve them, we render ourselves despicable by accepting them. If, on the contrary, the man without should reproach us, either for actions which we never performed, or for motives which had no influence upon those which we may have performed; the man within may immediately correct this false judgment, and assure us, that we are by no means the proper objects of that censure which has so unjustly been bestowed upon us. But in this and in some other cases, the man within seems sometimes, as it were, astonished and confounded by the vehemence and clamour of the man without. The violence and loudness, with which blame is sometimes poured out upon us, seems to stupify and benumb our natural sense of

praise-

praiſe-worthineſs and blame-worthineſs; and the judgments of the man within, though not, perhaps, abſolutely altered or perverted, are however, ſo much ſhaken in the ſteadineſs and firmneſs of their deciſion, that their natural effect, in ſecuring the tranquillity of the mind, is frequently in a great meaſure deſtroyed. We ſcarce dare to abſolve ourſelves, when all our brethren appear loudly to condemn us. The ſuppoſed impartial ſpectator of our conduct ſeems to give his opinion in our favour with fear and heſitation; when that of all the real ſpectators, when that of all thoſe with whoſe eyes and from whoſe ſtation he endeavours to conſider it, is unanimouſly and violently againſt us. In ſuch caſes, this demigod within the breaſt appears, like the demigods of the poets, though partly of immortal, yet partly too of mortal extraction. When his judgments are ſteadily and firmly directed by the ſenſe of praiſe-worthineſs and blame-worthineſs, he ſeems to act ſuitably to his divine extraction: But when he ſuffers himſelf to be aſtoniſhed and confounded by the judgments of ignorant and weak man, he diſcovers his connexion with mortality, and appears to act ſuitably, rather to the human, than to the divine, part of his origin.

In

In ſuch caſes, the only effectual conſolation of humbled and afflicted man lies in an appeal to a ſtill higher tribunal, to that of the all-ſeeing Judge of the world, whoſe eye can never be deceived, and whoſe judgments can never be perverted. A firm confidence in the unerring rectitude of this great tribunal, before which his innocence is in due time to be declared, and his virtue to be finally rewarded, can alone ſupport him under the weakneſs and deſpondency of his own mind, under the perturbation and aſtoniſhment of the man within the breaſt, whom nature has ſet up as, in this life, the great guardian, not only of his innocence, but of his tranquillity. Our happineſs in this life is thus, upon many occaſions, dependent upon the humble hope and expectation of a life to come: a hope and expectation deeply rooted in human nature; which can alone ſupport its lofty ideas of its own dignity; can alone illumine the dreary proſpect of its continually approaching mortality, and maintain its cheerfulneſs under all the heavieſt calamities to which, from the diſorders of this life, it may ſometimes be expoſed. That there is a world to come, where exact juſtice will be done to every man, where every man will be ranked with thoſe who, in the moral

moral and intellectual qualities, are really his equals; where the owner of those humble talents and virtues which, from being depressed by fortune, had, in this life, no opportunity of displaying themselves; which were unknown, not only to the public, but which he himself could scarce be sure that he possessed, and for which even the man within the breast could scarce venture to afford him any distinct and clear testimony; where that modest, silent, and unknown merit will be placed upon a level, and sometimes above those who, in this world, had enjoyed the highest reputation, and who, from the advantage of their situation, had been enabled to perform the most splendid and dazzling actions; is a doctrine in every respect so venerable, so comfortable to the weakness, so flattering to the grandeur of human nature, that the virtuous man who has the misfortune to doubt of it, cannot possibly avoid wishing most earnestly and anxiously to believe it. It could never have been exposed to the derision of the scoffer, had not the distribution of rewards and punishments, which some of its most zealous asserters have taught us was to be made in that world to come, been too frequently in direct opposition to all our moral sentiments.

That

That the aſſiduous courtier is often more favoured than the faithful and active ſervant; that attendance and adulation are often ſhorter and ſurer roads to preferments than merit or ſervice; and that a campaign at Verſailles or St. James's is often worth two either in Germany or Flanders, is a complaint which we have all heard from many a venerable, but diſcontented old officer. But what is conſidered as the greateſt reproach even to the weakneſs of earthly ſovereigns, has been aſcribed, as an act of juſtice, to divine perfection; and the duties of devotion, the public and private worſhip of the Deity, have been repreſented, even by men of virtue and abilities, as the ſole virtues which can either entitle to reward or exempt from puniſhment in the life to come. They were the virtues, perhaps, moſt ſuitable to their ſtation, and in which they themſelves chiefly excelled; and we are all naturally diſpoſed to over-rate the excellencies of our own characters. In the diſcourſe which the eloquent and philoſophical Maſſillon pronounced, on giving his benediction to the ſtandards of the regiment of Catinat, there is the following addreſs to the officers: "What is moſt deplorable in your "ſituation, Gentlemen, is, that in a life

"hard

" hard and painful, in which the ſervices and
" the duties ſometimes go beyond the rigour
" and ſeverity of the moſt auſtere cloiſters;
" you ſuffer always in vain for the life to
" come, and frequently even for this life.
" Alas! the ſolitary monk in his cell, ob-
" liged to mortify the fleſh and to ſubject it to
" the ſpirit, is ſupported by the hope of
" an aſſured recompence, and by the ſecret
" unction of that grace which ſoftens the
" yoke of the Lord. But you, on the bed
" of death can you dare to repreſent to Him
" your fatigues and the daily hardſhips of
" your employment? can you dare to ſolicit
" Him for any recompence? and in all the
" exertions that you have made, in all the
" violences that you have done to yourſelves,
" what is there that He ought to place to
" His own account? The beſt days of your
" life, however, have been ſacrificed to your
" profeſſion, and ten years' ſervice has more
" worn out your body, than would, perhaps,
" have done a whole life of repentance and
" mortification. Alas! my brother, one
" ſingle day of thoſe ſufferings, conſecrated
" to the Lord, would, perhaps, have ob-
" tained you an eternal happineſs. One
" ſingle action, painful to nature, and offered
" up to Him, would, perhaps, have ſecured

" to

"to you the inheritance of the Saints. And "you have done all this, and in vain, for "this world."

To compare, in this manner, the futile mortifications of a monaſtery, to the ennobling hardſhips and hazards of war; to ſuppoſe that one day, or one hour, employed in the former ſhould, in the eye of the great Judge of the world have more merit than a whole life ſpent honourably in the latter, is ſurely contrary to all our moral ſentiments; to all the principles by which nature has taught us to regulate our contempt or admiration. It is this ſpirit, however, which, while it has reſerved the celeſtial regions for monks and friars, or for thoſe whoſe conduct and converſation reſembled thoſe of monks and friars, has condemned to the infernal all the heroes, all the ſtateſmen and lawgivers, all the poets and philoſophers of former ages; all thoſe who have invented, improved, or excelled in the arts which contribute to the ſubſiſtence, to the conveniency, or to the ornament of human life; all the great protectors, inſtructors, and benefactors of mankind; all thoſe to whom our natural ſenſe of praiſe-worthineſs forces us to aſcribe the higheſt merit and moſt exalted virtue. Can we wonder that ſo ſtrange an application

of

of this moſt reſpectable doctrine ſhould ſometimes have expoſed it to contempt and deriſion; with thoſe at leaſt who had themſelves, perhaps, no great taſte or turn for the devout and contemplative virtues*?

CHAP. III.

Of the Influence and Authority of Conſcience.

BUT though the approbation of his own conſcience can ſcarce, upon ſome extraordinary occaſions, content the weakneſs of man; though the teſtimony of the ſuppoſed impartial ſpectator of the great inmate of the breaſt, cannot always alone ſupport him; yet the influence and authority of this principle is, upon all occaſions, very great; and it is only by conſulting this judge within that we can ever ſee what relates to ourſelves in its proper ſhape and dimenſions; or that we can ever make any proper compariſon between our own intereſts and thoſe of other people.

* See Voltaire.

Vous y grillez ſage et docte Platon,
Divin Homere, eloquent Ciceron, &c.

As to the eye of the body, objects appear great or small, not so much according to their real dimensions, as according to the nearness or distance of their situation; so do they likewise to what may be called the natural eye of the mind: and we remedy the defects of both these organs pretty much in the same manner. In my present situation an immense landscape of lawns and woods, and distant mountains, seems to do no more than cover the little window which I write by, and to be out of all proportion less than the chamber in which I am sitting. I can form a just comparison between those great objects and the little objects around me, in no other way, than by transporting myself, at least in fancy, to a different station, from whence I can survey both at nearly equal distances, and thereby form some judgment of their real proportions. Habit and experience have taught me to do this so easily and so readily, that I am scarce sensible that I do it; and a man must be, in some measure, acquainted with the philosophy of vision, before he can be thoroughly convinced how little those distant objects would appear to the eye, if the imagination, from a knowledge of their real magnitudes, did not swell and dilate them.

In the ſame manner, to the ſelfiſh and original paſſions of human nature, the loſs or gain of a very ſmall intereſt of our own, appears to be of vaſtly more importance, excites a much more paſſionate joy or ſorrow, a much more ardent deſire or averſion, than the greateſt concern of another with whom we have no particular connexion. His intereſts, as long as they are ſurveyed from his ſtation, can never be put into the balance with our own, can never reſtrain us from doing whatever may tend to promote our own, how ruinous ſoever to him. Before we can make any proper compariſon of thoſe oppoſite intereſts, we muſt change our poſition. We muſt view them, neither from our own place nor yet from his, neither with our own eyes nor yet with his, but from the place and with the eyes of a third perſon, who has no particular connexion with either, and who judges with impartiality between us. Here, too, habit and experience have taught us to do this ſo eaſily and ſo readily, that we are ſcarce ſenſible that we do it; and it requires, in this caſe too, ſome degree of reflection, and even of philoſophy, to convince us, how little intereſt we ſhould take in the greateſt concerns of our neighbour, how little we ſhould be affected by

by whatever relates to him, if the ſenſe of propriety and juſtice did not correct the otherwiſe natural inequality of our ſentiments.

Let us ſuppoſe that the great empire of China, with all its myriads of inhabitants, was ſuddenly ſwallowed up by an earthquake, and let us conſider how a man of humanity in Europe, who had no ſort of connexion with that part of the world, would be affected upon receiving intelligence of this dreadful calamity. He would, I imagine, firſt of all, expreſs very ſtrongly his ſorrow for the misfortune of that unhappy people, he would make many melancholy reflections upon the precarioufneſs of human life, and the vanity of all the labours of man, which could thus be annihilated in a moment. He would too, perhaps, if he was a man of ſpeculation, enter into many reaſonings concerning the effects which this diſaſter might produce upon the commerce of Europe, and the trade and buſineſs of the world in general. And when all this fine philoſophy was over, when all theſe humane ſentiments had been once fairly expreſſed, he would purſue his buſineſs or his pleaſure, take his repoſe or his diverſion, with the ſame eaſe and tranquillity as if no ſuch accident had happened. The moſt frivolous diſaſter which could be-

ſal himſelf would occaſion a more real diſturbance. If he was to loſe his little finger to-morrow, he would not ſleep to-night; but, provided he never ſaw them, he will ſnore with the moſt profound ſecurity over the ruin of a hundred millions of his brethren, and the deſtruction of that immenſe multitude ſeems plainly an object leſs intereſting to him, than this paltry misfortune of his own. To prevent, therefore, this paltry misfortune to himſelf, would a man of humanity be willing to ſacrifice the lives of a hundred millions of his brethren, provided he had never ſeen them? Human nature ſtartles with horror at the thought, and the world, in its greateſt depravity and corruption, never produced ſuch a villain as could be capable of entertaining it. But what makes this difference? when our paſſive feelings are almoſt always ſo ſordid and ſo ſelfiſh, how comes it that our active principles ſhould often be ſo generous and ſo noble? When we are always ſo much more deeply affected by whatever concerns ourſelves, than by whatever concerns other men; what is it which prompts the generous, upon all occaſions, and the mean upon many, to ſacrifice their own intereſt to the greater intereſts of others? It is not the ſoft power of humanity, it is not that feeble ſpark of benevolence

which

which Nature has lighted up in the human heart, that is thus capable of counteracting the ſtrongeſt impulſes of ſelf-love. It is a ſtronger power, a more forcible motive, which exerts itſelf upon ſuch occaſions. It is reaſon, principle, conſcience, the inhabitant of the breaſt, the man within, the great judge and arbiter of our conduct. It is he who, whenever we are about to act ſo as to affect the happineſs of others, calls to us, with a voice capable of aſtoniſhing the moſt preſumptuous of our paſſions, that we are but one of the multitude, in no reſpect better than any other in it; and that when we prefer ourſelves ſo ſhamefully and ſo blindly to others, we become the proper objects of reſentment, abhorrence, and execration. It is from him only that we learn the real littleneſs of ourſelves, and of whatever relates to ourſelves, and the natural miſrepreſentations of ſelf-love can be corrected only by the eye of this impartial ſpectator. It is he who ſhows us the propriety of generoſity and the deformity of injuſtice; the propriety of reſigning the greateſt intereſts of our own, for the yet greater intereſts of others; and the deformity of doing the ſmalleſt injury to another, in order to obtain the greateſt benefit to ourſelves. It is not the love of our neigh-

bour, it is not the love of mankind, which upon many occaſions prompts us to the practice of thoſe divine virtues. It is a ſtronger love, a more powerful affection, which generally takes place upon ſuch occaſions; the love of what is honourable and noble, of the grandeur, and dignity, and ſuperiority of our own characters.

When the happineſs or miſery of others depends in any reſpect upon our conduct, we dare not, as ſelf-love might ſuggeſt to us, prefer the intereſt of one to that of many. The man within immediately calls to us, that we value ourſelves too much and other people too little, and that, by doing ſo, we render ourſelves the proper object of the contempt and indignation of our brethren. Neither is this ſentiment confined to men of extraordinary magnanimity and virtue. It is deeply impreſſed upon every tolerably good ſoldier, who feels that he would become the ſcorn of his companions, if he could be ſuppoſed capable of ſhrinking from danger, or of heſitating, either to expoſe or to throw away his life, when the good of the ſervice required it.

One individual muſt never prefer himſelf ſo much even to any other individual, as to hurt or injure that other, in order to benefit himſelf,

himſelf, though the benefit to the one ſhould be much greater than the hurt or injury to the other. The poor man muſt neither defraud nor ſteal from the rich, though the acquiſition might be much more beneficial to the one than the loſs could be hurtful to the other. The man within immediately calls to him, in this caſe too, that he is no better than his neighbour, and that by his unjuſt preference he renders himſelf the proper object of the contempt and indignation of mankind: as well as of the puniſhment which that contempt and indignation muſt naturally diſpoſe them to inflict, for having thus violated one of thoſe ſacred rules, upon the tolerable obſervation of which depend the whole ſecurity and peace of human ſociety. There is no commonly honeſt man who does not more dread the inward diſgrace of ſuch an action, the indelible ſtain which it would for ever ſtamp upon his own mind, than the greateſt external calamity which, without any fault of his own, could poſſibly befal him; and who does not inwardly feel the truth of that great ſtoical maxim, that for one man to deprive another unjuſtly of any thing, or unjuſtly to promote his own advantage by the loſs or diſadvantage of another, is more contrary to nature, than

death, than poverty, than pain, than all the misfortunes which can affect him, either in his body, or in his external circumstances.

When the happiness or misery of others, indeed, in no respect depends upon our conduct, when our interests are altogether separated and detached from theirs, so that there is neither connexion nor competition between them, we do not always think it so necessary to restrain, either our natural and, perhaps, improper anxiety about our own affairs, or our natural and, perhaps, equally improper indifference about those of other men. The most vulgar education teaches us to act, upon all important occasions, with some sort of impartiality between ourselves and others, and even the ordinary commerce of the world is capable of adjusting our active principles to some degree of propriety. But it is the most artificial and refined education only, it has been said, which can correct the inequalities of our passive feelings; and we must for this purpose, it has been pretended, have recourse to the severest, as well as to the profoundest philosophy.

Two different sets of philosophers have attempted to teach us this hardest of all the lessons of morality. One set have laboured to increase our sensibility to the interests of

others;

others; another, to diminiſh that to our own. The firſt would have us feel for others as we naturally feel for ourſelves. The ſecond would have us feel for ourſelves as we naturally feel for others. Both, perhaps, have carried their doctrines a good deal beyond the juſt ſtandard of nature and propriety.

The firſt of thoſe whining and melancholy moraliſts, who are perpetually reproaching us with our happineſs, while ſo many of our brethren are in miſery*, who regard as impious the natural joy of proſperity, which does not think of the many wretches that are at every inſtant labouring under all ſorts of calamities, in the languor of poverty, in the agony of diſeaſe, in the horrors of death, under the inſults and oppreſſion of their enemies. Commiſeration for thoſe miſeries which we never ſaw, which we never heard of, but which we may be aſſured are at all times infeſting ſuch numbers of our fellow-creatures, ought, they think, to damp the pleaſures of the fortunate, and to render a certain melancholy dejection habitual to all men. But firſt of all, this extreme ſympa-

* See Thompſon's Seaſons, Winter:
"Ah! little think the gay licentious proud," &c. See alſo Paſchal.

thy

thy with misfortunes which we know nothing about, ſeems altogether abſurd and unreaſonable. Take the whole earth at an average, for one man who ſuffers pain or miſery, you will find twenty in proſperity and joy, or at leaſt in tolerable circumſtances. No reaſon, ſurely, can be aſſigned why we ſhould rather weep with the one than rejoice with the twenty. This artificial commiſeration, beſides, is not only abſurd, but ſeems altogether unattainable; and thoſe who affect this character have commonly nothing but a certain affected and ſentimental ſadneſs, which, without reaching the heart, ſerves only to render the countenance and converſation impertinently diſmal and diſagreeable. And laſt of all, this diſpoſition of mind, though it could be attained, would be perfectly uſeleſs, and could ſerve no other purpoſe than to render miſerable the perſon who poſſeſſed it. Whatever intereſt we take in the fortune of thoſe with whom we have no acquaintance or connexion, and who are placed altogether out of the ſphere of our activity, can produce only anxiety to ourſelves, without any manner of advantage to them. To what purpoſe ſhould we trouble ourſelves about the world in the moon? All men, even thoſe at the greateſt diſtance, are

no

no doubt entitled to our good wiſhes, and our good wiſhes we naturally give them. But if, notwithſtanding, they ſhould be unfortunate, to give ourſelves any anxiety upon that account ſeems to be no part of our duty. That we ſhould be but little intereſted, therefore, in the fortune of thoſe whom we can neither ſerve nor hurt, and who are in every reſpect ſo very remote from us, ſeems wiſely ordered by Nature; and if it were poſſible to alter in this reſpect the original conſtitution of our frame, we could yet gain nothing by the change.

It is never objected to us that we have too little fellow-feeling with the joy of ſucceſs. Wherever envy does not prevent it, the favour which we bear to proſperity is rather apt to be too great; and the ſame moraliſts who blame us for want of ſufficient ſympathy with the miſerable, reproach us for the levity with which we are too apt to admire and almoſt to worſhip the fortunate, the powerful, and the rich.

Among the moraliſts who endeavour to correct the natural inequality of our paſſive feelings by diminiſhing our ſenſibility to what peculiarly concerns ourſelves, we may count all the ancient ſects of philoſophers, but particularly the ancient Stoics. Man, according

according to the Stoics, ought to regard himſelf, not as ſomething ſeparated and detached, but as a citizen of the world, a member of the vaſt commonwealth of nature. To the intereſt of this great community, he ought at all times to be willing that his own little intereſt ſhould be ſacrificed. Whatever concerns himſelf, ought to affect him no more than whatever concerns any other equally important part of this immenſe ſyſtem. We ſhould view ourſelves, not in the light in which our own ſelfiſh paſſions are apt to place us, but in the light in which any other citizen of the world would view us. What befals ourſelves we ſhould regard as what befals our neighbour, or, what comes to the ſame thing, as our neighbour regards what befals us. "When our neighbour," ſays Epictetus, "loſes his wife, or his ſon, there "is nobody who is not ſenſible that this is a "human calamity, a natural event altoge-"ther according to the ordinary courſe of "things; but, when the ſame thing happens "to ourſelves, then we cry out, as if we "had ſuffered the moſt dreadful misfortune. "We ought, however, to remember how "we were affected when this accident hap-"pened to another, and ſuch as we were in "his caſe, ſuch ought we to be in our own."

Thoſe

Thoſe private misfortunes, for which our feelings are apt to go beyond the bounds of propriety, are of two different kinds. They are either ſuch as affect us only indirectly, by affecting, in the firſt place, ſome other perſons who are particularly dear to us; ſuch as our parents, our children, our brothers and ſiſters, our intimate friends; or they are ſuch as affect ourſelves immediately and directly, either in our body, in our fortune, or in our reputation; ſuch as pain, ſickneſs, approaching death, poverty, diſgrace, &c.

In misfortunes of the firſt kind, our emotions may, no doubt, go very much beyond what exact propriety will admit of; but they may likewiſe fall ſhort of it, and they frequently do ſo. The man who ſhould feel no more for the death or diſtreſs of his own father, or ſon, than for thoſe of any other man's father or ſon, would appear neither a good ſon nor a good father. Such unnatural indifference, far from exciting our applauſe, would incur our higheſt diſapprobation. Of thoſe domeſtic affections, however, ſome are moſt apt to offend by their exceſs, and others by their defect. Nature, for the wiſeſt purpoſes, has rendered in moſt men, perhaps in all men, parental tenderneſs a much ſtronger affection than filial piety.

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The continuance and propagation of the ſpecies depend altogether upon the former, and not upon the latter. In ordinary caſes, the exiſtence and preſervation of the child depend altogether upon the care of the parents. Thoſe of the parents ſeldom depend upon that of the child. Nature, therefore, has rendered the former affection ſo ſtrong, that it generally requires not to be excited, but to be moderated; and moraliſts ſeldom endeavour to teach us how to indulge, but generally how to reſtrain our fondneſs, our exceſſive attachment, the unjuſt preference which we are diſpoſed to give to our own children above thoſe of other people. They exhort us, on the contrary, to an affectionate attention to our parents, and to make a proper return to them in their old age, for the kindneſs which they had ſhown to us in our infancy and youth. In the Decalogue we are commanded to honour our fathers and mothers. No mention is made of the love of our children. Nature had ſufficiently prepared us for the performance of this latter duty. Men are ſeldom accuſed of affecting to be fonder of their children than they really are. They have ſometimes been ſuſpected of diſplaying their piety to their parents with too much oſtentation.

tation. The oſtentatious ſorrow of widows has, for a like reaſon, been ſuſpected of inſincerity. We ſhould reſpect, could we believe it ſincere, even the exceſs of ſuch kind affections; and though we might not perfectly approve, we ſhould not ſeverely condemn it. That it appears praiſe-worthy, at leaſt in the eyes of thoſe who affect it, the very affectation is a proof.

Even the exceſs of thoſe kind affections which are moſt apt to offend by their exceſs, though it may appear blameable, never appears odious. We blame the exceſſive fondneſs and anxiety of a parent, as ſomething which may, in the end, prove hurtful to the child, and which, in the mean time, is exceſſively inconvenient to the parent; but we eaſily pardon it, and never regard it with hatred and deteſtation. But the defect of this uſually exceſſive affection appears always peculiarly odious.

The man who appears to feel nothing for his own children, but who treats them upon all occaſions with unmerited ſeverity and harſhneſs, ſeems of all brutes the moſt deteſtable. The ſenſe of propriety, ſo far from requiring us to eradicate altogether that extraordinary ſenſibility, which we naturally feel for the misfortunes of our neareſt con-

nections, is always much more offended by the defect, than it ever is by the excess of that sensibility. The stoical apathy is, in such cases, never agreeable, and all the metaphisical sophisms by which it is supported can seldom serve any other purpose than to blow up the hard insensibility of a coxcomb to ten times its native impertinence. The poets and romance writers, who best paint the refinements and delicacies of love and friendship, and of all other private and domestic affections, Racine and Voltaire; Richardson, Maurivaux, and Riccoboni; are, in such cases, much better instructors than Zeno, Chrysippus, or Epictetus.

That moderated sensibility to the misfortunes of others, which does not disqualify us for the performance of any duty; the melancholy and affectionate remembrance of our departed friends; *the pang*, as Gray says, *to secret sorrow dear*; are by no means undelicious sensations. Though they outwardly wear the features of pain and grief, they are all inwardly stamped with the ennobling characters of virtue and self-approbation.

It is otherwise in the misfortunes which affect ourselves immediately and directly, either in our body, in our fortune, or in our reputation. The sense of propriety is much more

more apt to be offended by the exceſs, than by the defect of our ſenſibility, and there are but very few caſes in which we can approach too near to the ſtoical apathy and indifference.

That we have very little fellow-feeling with any of the paſſions which take their origin from the body, has already been obſerved. That pain which is occaſioned by an evident cauſe; ſuch as, the cutting or tearing of the fleſh, is, perhaps, the affection of the body with which the ſpectator feels the moſt lively ſympathy. The approaching death of his neighbour, too, ſeldom fails to affect him a good deal. In both caſes, however, he feels ſo very little in compariſon of what the perſon principally concerned feels, that the latter can ſcarce ever offend the former by appearing to ſuffer with too much eaſe.

The mere want of fortune, mere poverty, excites little compaſſion. Its complaints are too apt to be the objects rather of contempt than of fellow-feeling. We deſpiſe a beggar; and, though his importunities may extort an alms from us, he is ſcarce ever the object of any ſerious commiſeration. The fall from riches to poverty, as it commonly occaſions the moſt real diſtreſs to the ſufferer, ſo it

ſeldom fails to excite the moſt ſincere commiſeration in the ſpectator. Though in the preſent ſtate of ſociety, this misfortune can ſeldom happen without ſome miſconduct, and ſome very conſiderable miſconduct too, in the ſufferer; yet he is almoſt always ſo much pitied that he is ſcarce ever allowed to fall into the loweſt ſtate of poverty; but by the means of his friends, frequently by the indulgence of thoſe very creditors who have much reaſon to complain of his imprudence, is almoſt always ſupported in ſome degree of decent, though humble mediocrity. To perſons under ſuch misfortunes, we could, perhaps, eaſily pardon ſome degree of weakneſs; but, at the ſame time, they who carry the firmeſt countenance, who accommodate themſelves with the greateſt eaſe to their new ſituation, who ſeem to feel no humiliation from the change, but to reſt their rank in the ſociety, not upon their fortune, but upon their character and conduct, are always the moſt approved of, and never fail to command our higheſt and moſt affectionate admiration.

As, of all the external misfortunes which can affect an innocent man immediately and directly, the undeſerved loſs of reputation is certainly the greateſt; ſo a conſiderable degree of ſenſibility to whatever can bring on

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so great a calamity, does not always appear ungraceful or disagreeable. We often esteem a young man the more, when he resents, though with some degree of violence, any unjust reproach that may have been thrown upon his character or his honour. The affliction of an innocent young lady, on account of the groundless surmises which may have been circulated concerning her conduct, appears often perfectly amiable. Persons of an advanced age, whom long experience of the folly and injustice of the world, has taught to pay little regard, either to its censure or to its applause, neglect and despise obloquy, and do not even deign to honour its futile authors with any serious resentment. This indifference, which is founded altogether on a firm confidence in their own well-tried and well-established characters, would be disagreeable in young people, who neither can nor ought to have any such confidence. It might in them be supposed to forebode, in their advancing years, a most improper insensibility to real honour and infamy.

In all other private misfortunes which affect ourselves immediately and directly, we can very seldom offend by appearing to be too little affected. We frequently remember our sensibility to the misfortunes of others

with pleaſure and ſatisfaction. We can ſeldom remember that to our own, without ſome degree of ſhame and humiliation.

If we examine the different ſhades and gradations of weakneſs and ſelf-command, as we meet with them in common life, we ſhall very eaſily ſatisfy ourſelves that this control of our paſſive feelings muſt be acquired, not from the abſtruſe ſyllogiſms of a quibbling dialectic, but from that great diſcipline which Nature has eſtabliſhed for the acquiſition of this and of every other virtue; a regard to the ſentiments of the real or ſuppoſed ſpectator of our conduct.

A very young child has no ſelf-command; but, whatever are its emotions, whether fear, or grief, or anger, it endeavours always, by the violence of its outcries, to alarm, as much as it can, the attention of its nurſe, or of its parents. While it remains under the cuſtody of ſuch partial protectors, its anger is the firſt and, perhaps, the only paſſion which it is taught to moderate. By noiſe and threatening they are, for their own eaſe, often obliged to frighten it into good temper; and the paſſion which incites it to attack, is reſtrained by that which teaches it to attend to its own ſafety. When it is old enough to go to ſchool, or to mix with its equals, it ſoon

ſoon finds that they have no ſuch indulgent partiality. It naturally wiſhes to gain their favour, and to avoid their hatred or contempt. Regard even to its own ſafety teaches it to do ſo; and it ſoon finds that it can do ſo in no other way than by moderating, not only its anger, but all its other paſſions, to the degree which its play-fellows and companions are likely to be pleaſed with. It thus enters into the great ſchool of ſelf-command, it ſtudies to be more and more maſter of itſelf, and begins to exerciſe over its own feelings a diſcipline which the practice of the longeſt life is very ſeldom ſufficient to bring to complete perfection.

In all private misfortunes, in pain, in ſickneſs, in ſorrow, the weakeſt man, when his friend, and ſtill more when a ſtranger viſits him, is immediately impreſſed with the view in which they are likely to look upon his ſituation. Their view calls off his attention from his own view; and his breaſt is, in ſome meaſure, becalmed the moment they come into his preſence. The effect is produced inſtantaneouſly, and, as it were, mechanically; but, with a weak man, it is not of long continuance. His own view of his ſituation immediately recurs upon him. He abandons himſelf, as before, to ſighs and tears and

lamentations, and endeavours, like a child that has not yet gone to ſchool, to produce ſome ſort of harmony between his own grief and the compaſſion of the ſpectator, not by moderating the former, but by importunately calling upon the latter.

With a man of a little more firmneſs, the effect is ſomewhat more permanent. He endeavours, as much as he can, to fix his attention upon the view which the company are likely to take of his ſituation. He feels, at the ſame time, the eſteem and approbation which they naturally conceive for him when he thus preſerves his tranquillity; and, though under the preſſure of ſome recent and great calamity, appears to feel for himſelf no more than what they really feel for him. He approves and applauds himſelf by ſympathy with their approbation, and the pleaſure which he derives from this ſentiment ſupports and enables him more eaſily to continue this generous effort. In moſt caſes he avoids mentioning his own misfortune; and his company, if they are tolerably well bred, are careful to ſay nothing which can put him in mind of it. He endeavours to entertain them, in his uſual way, upon indifferent ſubjects, or, if he feels himſelf ſtrong enough to venture to mention his misfortune, he endeavours

vours to talk of it, as he thinks they are capable of talking of it, and even to feel it no further than they are capable of feeling it. If he has not, however, been well inured to the hard diſcipline of ſelf-command, he ſoon grows weary of this reſtraint. A long viſit fatigues him; and, towards the end of it, he is conſtantly in danger of doing, what he never fails to do the moment it is over, of abandoning himſelf to all the weakneſs of exceſſive ſorrow. Modern good manners, which are extremely indulgent to human weakneſs, forbid, for ſome time, the viſits of ſtrangers to perſons under great family diſtreſs, and permit thoſe only of the neareſt relations and moſt intimate friends. The preſence of the latter, it is thought, will impoſe leſs reſtraint than that of the former; and the ſufferers can more eaſily accommodate themſelves to the feelings of thoſe, from whom they have reaſon to expect a more indulgent ſympathy. Secret enemies, who fancy that they are not known to be ſuch, are frequently fond of making thoſe charitable viſits as early as the moſt intimate friends. The weakeſt man in the world, in this caſe, endeavours to ſupport his manly countenance, and, from indignation and contempt of their malice, to

behave with as much gaiety and eaſe as he can.

The man of real conſtancy and firmneſs, the wiſe and juſt man who has been thoroughly bred in the great ſchool of ſelf-command, in the buſtle and buſineſs of the world, expoſed, perhaps, to the violence and injuſtice of faction, and to the hardſhips and hazards of war, maintains this controul of his paſſive feelings upon all occaſions; and whether in ſolitude or in ſociety, wears nearly the ſame countenance, and is affected very nearly in the ſame manner. In ſucceſs and in diſappointment, in proſperity and in adverſity, before friends and before enemies, he has often been under the neceſſity of ſupporting this manhood. He has never dared to forget for one moment the judgment which the impartial ſpectator would paſs upon his ſentiments and conduct. He has never dared to ſuffer the man within the breaſt to be abſent one moment from his attention. With the eyes of this great inmate he has always been accuſtomed to regard whatever relates to himſelf. This habit has become perfectly familiar to him. He has been in the conſtant practice, and, indeed, under the conſtant neceſſity, of modelling, or of endeavouring

vouring to model, not only his outward conduct and behaviour, but, as much as he can, even his inward ſentiments and feelings, according to thoſe of this awful and reſpectable judge. He does not merely affect the ſentiments of the impartial ſpectator. He really adopts them. He almoſt identifies himſelf with, he almoſt becomes himſelf that impartial ſpectator, and ſcarce even feels but as that great arbiter of his conduct directs him to feel.

The degree of the ſelf-approbation with which every man, upon ſuch occaſions, ſurveys his own conduct, is higher or lower, exactly in proportion to the degree of ſelf-command which is neceſſary in order to obtain that ſelf-approbation. Where little ſelf-command is neceſſary, little ſelf-approbation is due. The man who has only ſcratched his finger, cannot much applaud himſelf, though he ſhould immediately appear to have forgot this paltry misfortune. The man who has loſt his leg by a cannon ſhot, and who, the moment after, ſpeaks and acts with his uſual coolneſs and tranquillity, as he exerts a much higher degree of ſelf-command, ſo he naturally feels a much higher degree of ſelf-approbation. With moſt men, upon ſuch an accident, their own natural view of their own misfortune would force

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itſelf upon them with ſuch a vivacity and ſtrength of colouring, as would entirely efface all thought of every other view. They would feel nothing, they could attend to nothing, but their own pain and their own fear; and not only the judgment of the ideal man within the breaſt, but that of the real ſpectators who might happen to be preſent, would be entirely overlooked and diſregarded.

The reward which Nature beſtows upon good behaviour under misfortune, is thus exactly proportioned to the degree of that good behaviour. The only compenſation ſhe could poſſibly make for the bitterneſs of pain and diſtreſs is thus too, in equal degrees of good behaviour, exactly proportioned to the degree of that pain and diſtreſs. In proportion to the degree of the ſelf-command which is neceſſary in order to conquer our natural ſenſibility, the pleaſure and pride of the conqueſt are ſo much the greater; and this pleaſure and pride are ſo great that no man can be altogether unhappy who completely enjoys them. Miſery and wretchedneſs can never enter the breaſt in which dwells complete ſelf-ſatisfaction; and though it may be too much, perhaps, to ſay, with the Stoics, that, under ſuch an accident as

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that above mentioned, the happineſs of a wiſe man is in every reſpect equal to what it could have been under any other circumſtances; yet it muſt be acknowledged, at leaſt, that this complete enjoyment of his own ſelf-applauſe, though it may not altogether extinguiſh, muſt certainly very much alleviate his ſenſe of his own ſufferings.

In ſuch paroxyſms of diſtreſs, if I may be allowed to call them ſo, the wiſeſt and firmeſt man, in order to preſerve his equanimity, is obliged, I imagine, to make a conſiderable and even a painful exertion. His own natural feeling of his own diſtreſs, his own natural view of his own ſituation, preſſes hard upon him, and he cannot without a very great effort, fix his attention upon that of the impartial ſpectator. Both views preſent themſelves to him at the ſame time. His ſenſe of honour, his regard to his own dignity, directs him to fix his whole attention upon the one view. His natural, his untaught and undiſciplined feelings, are continually calling it off to the other. He does not, in this caſe, perfectly identify himſelf with the ideal man within the breaſt, he does not become himſelf the impartial ſpectator of his own conduct. The different views of both characters exiſt in his mind ſeparate and diſtinct from

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one another, and each directing him to a behaviour different from that to which the other directs him. When he follows that view which honour and dignity point out to him, Nature does not, indeed, leave him without a recompenſe. He enjoys his own complete ſelf-approbation, and the applauſe of every candid and impartial ſpectator. By her unalterable laws, however, he ſtill ſuffers; and the recompenſe which ſhe beſtows, though very conſiderable, is not ſufficient completely to compenſate the ſufferings which thoſe laws inflict. Neither is it fit that it ſhould. If it did completely compenſate them, he could, from ſelf-intereſt, have no motive for avoiding an accident which muſt neceſſarily diminiſh his utility both to himſelf and to ſociety; and Nature, from her parental care of both, meant that he ſhould anxiouſly avoid all ſuch accidents. He ſuffers, therefore, and though, in the agony of the paroxyſm, he maintains, not only the manhood of his countenance, but the ſedateneſs and ſobriety of his judgment, it requires his utmoſt and moſt fatiguing exertions to do ſo.

By the conſtitution of human nature, however, agony can never be permanent; and if he ſurvives the paroxyſm, he ſoon comes, without

without any effort to enjoy his ordinary tranquillity. A man with a wooden leg ſuffers, no doubt, and foreſees that he muſt continue to ſuffer during the remainder of his life, a very conſiderable inconveniency. He ſoon comes to view it, however, exactly as every impartial ſpectator views it; as an inconveniency under which he can enjoy all the ordinary pleaſures both of ſolitude and of ſociety. He ſoon identifies himſelf with the ideal man within the breaſt, he ſoon becomes himſelf the impartial ſpectator of his own ſituation. He no longer weeps, he no longer laments, he no longer grieves over it, as a weak man may ſometimes do in the beginning. The view of the impartial ſpectator becomes ſo perfectly habitual to him, that, without any effort, without any exertion, he never thinks of ſurveying his misfortune in any other view.

The never-failing certainty with which all men ſooner or later, accommodate themſelves to whatever becomes their permanent ſituation, may, perhaps, induce us to think that the Stoics were, at leaſt, thus far very nearly in the right: that between one permanent ſituation and another, there was, with regard to real happineſs, no eſſential difference: or that, if there were any difference,

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it was no more than juſt ſufficient to render ſome of them the objects of ſimple choice or preference; but not of any earneſt or anxious deſire; and others of ſimple rejection, as being fit to be ſet aſide or avoided; but not of any earneſt or anxious averſion. Happineſs conſiſts in tranquillity and enjoyment. Without tranquillity there can be no enjoyment; and where there is perfect tranquillity there is ſcarce any thing which is not capable of amuſing. But in every permanent ſituation, where there is no expectation of change, the mind of every man, in a longer or a ſhorter time, returns to its natural and uſual ſtate of tranquillity. In proſperity, after a certain time, it falls back to that ſtate; in adverſity, after a certain time, it riſes up to it. In the confinement and ſolitude of the Baſtile, after a certain time, the faſhionable and frivolous Count de Lauzun recovered tranquillity enough to be capable of amuſing himſelf with feeding a ſpider. A mind better furniſhed would, perhaps, have both ſooner recovered its tranquillity, and ſooner found, in its own thoughts, a much better amuſement.

The great ſource of both the miſery and diſorders of human life, ſeems to ariſe from over-rating the difference between one permanent

manent ſituation and another. Avarice overrates the difference between poverty and riches; ambition, that between a private and a public ſtation; vain-glory, that between obſcurity and extenſive reputation. The perſon under the influence of any of thoſe extravagant paſſions, is not only miſerable in his actual ſituation, but is often diſpoſed to diſturb the peace of ſociety, in order to arrive at that which he ſo fooliſhly admires. The ſlighteſt obſervation, however, might ſatisfy him, that in all the ordinary ſituations of human life, a well-diſpoſed mind may be equally calm, equally cheerful, and equally contented. Some of thoſe ſituations, may, no doubt, deſerve to be preferred to others: but none of them can deſerve to be purſued with that paſſionate ardour which drives us to violate the rules either of prudence or of juſtice; or to corrupt the future tranquillity of our minds, either by ſhame from the remembrance of our own folly, or by remorſe from the horror of our own injuſtice. Wherever prudence does not direct, wherever juſtice does not permit, the attempt to change our ſituation, the man who does attempt it, plays at the moſt unequal of all games of hazard, and ſtakes every thing againſt ſcarce any thing. What the favourite

ite of the king of Epirus ſaid to his maſter, may be applied to men in all the ordinary ſituations of human life. When the King had recounted to him, in their proper order, all the conqueſts which he propoſed to make, and had come to the laſt of them; And what does your Majeſty propoſe to do then? ſaid the Favourite.—I propoſe then, ſaid the King, to enjoy myſelf with my friends, and endeavour to be good company over a bottle.—And what hinders your Majeſty from doing ſo now? replied the Favourite. In the moſt glittering and exalted ſituation that our idle fancy can hold out to us, the pleaſures from which we propoſe to derive our real happineſs, are almoſt always the ſame with thoſe which, in our actual, though humble ſtation, we have at all times at hand, and in our power. Except the frivolous pleaſures of vanity and ſuperiority, we may find, in the moſt humble ſtation, where there is only perſonal liberty, every other which the moſt exalted can afford; and the pleaſures of vanity and ſuperiority are ſeldom conſiſtent with perfect tranquillity, the principle and foundation of all real and ſatisfactory enjoyment. Neither is it always certain that, in the ſplendid ſituation which we aim at, thoſe real and ſatisfactory pleaſures can be enjoyed

with the ſame ſecurity as in the humble one which we are ſo very eager to abandon. Examine the records of hiſtory, recollect what has happened within the circle of your own experience, conſider with attention what has been the conduct of almoſt all the greatly unfortunate, either in private or public life, whom you may have either read of, or heard of, or remember; and you will find that the misfortunes of by far the greater part of them have ariſen from their not knowing when they were well, when it was proper for them to ſit ſtill and to be contented. The inſcription upon the tomb-ſtone of the man who had endeavoured to mend a tolerable conſtitution by taking phyſic; "*I was well, I wiſhed to be better, here I am*;" may generally be applied with great juſtneſs to the diſtreſs of diſappointed avarice and ambition.

It may be thought a ſingular, but I believe it to be a juſt obſervation, that, in the misfortunes which admit of ſome remedy, the greater part of men do not either ſo readily or ſo univerſally recover their natural and uſual tranquillity, as in thoſe which plainly admit of none. In misfortunes of the latter kind, it is chiefly in what may be called the paroxyſm, or in the firſt attack, that we can

discover any sensible difference between the sentiments and behaviour of the wise and those of the weak man. In the end, Time, the great and universal comforter, gradually composes the weak man to the same degree of tranquillity which a regard to his own dignity and manhood teaches the wise man to assume in the beginning. The case of the man with the wooden leg is an obvious example of this. In the irreparable misfortunes occasioned by the death of children, or of friends and relations, even a wise man may for some time indulge himself in some degree of moderated sorrow. An affectionate, but weak woman, is often, upon such occasions, almost perfectly distracted. Time, however, in a longer or shorter period, never fails to compose the weakest woman to the same degree of tranquillity as the strongest man. In all the irreparable calamities which affect himself immediately and directly, a wise man endeavours, from the beginning, to anticipate and to enjoy before-hand, that tranquillity which he foresees the course of a few months, or a few years, will certainly restore to him in the end.

In the misfortunes for which the nature of things admits, or seems to admit, of a remedy, but in which the means of applying that remedy

remedy are not within the reach of the ſufferer, his vain and fruitleſs attempts to reſtore himſelf to his former ſituation, his continual anxiety for their ſucceſs, his repeated diſappointments upon their miſcarriage, are what chiefly hinder him from reſuming his natural tranquillity, and frequently render miſerable, during the whole of his life, a man to whom a greater misfortune, but which plainly admitted of no remedy, would not have given a fortnight's diſturbance. In the fall from royal favour to diſgrace, from power to inſignificancy, from riches to poverty, from liberty to confinement, from ſtrong health to ſome lingering, chronical, and perhaps incurable diſeaſe, the man who ſtruggles the leaſt, who moſt eaſily and readily acquieſces in the fortune which has fallen to him, very ſoon recovers his uſual and natural tranquillity, and ſurveys the moſt diſagreeable circumſtances of his actual ſituation in the ſame light, or perhaps, in a much leſs unfavourable light, than that in which the moſt indifferent ſpectator is diſpoſed to ſurvey them. Faction, intrigue, and cabal, diſturb the quiet of the unfortunate ſtateſman. Extravagant projects, viſions of gold mines, interrupt the repoſe of the ruined bankrupt. The priſoner, who is continually plotting to eſcape from his con-

finement, cannot enjoy that careleſs ſecurity which even a priſon can afford him. The medicines of the phyſician are often the greateſt torment of the incurable patient. The monk who, in order to comfort Johanna of Caſtile, upon the death of her huſband Philip, told her of a King, who fourteen years after his deceaſe had been reſtored to life again, by the prayers of his afflicted queen, was not likely by his legendary tale to reſtore ſedateneſs to the diſtempered mind of that unhappy Princeſs. She endeavoured to repeat the ſame experiment in hopes of the ſame ſucceſs; reſiſted for a long time the burial of her huſband, ſoon after raiſed his body from the grave, attended it almoſt conſtantly herſelf, and watched with all the impatient anxiety of frantic expectation, the happy moment when her wiſhes were to be gratified by the revival of her beloved Philip *.

Our ſenſibility to the feelings of others, ſo far from being inconſiſtent with the manhood of ſelf-command, is the very principle upon which that manhood is founded. The very ſame principle or inſtinct which, in the

* See Robertſon's Charles V. vol. ii. pp. 14 and 15. firſt edition.

misfortune

misfortune of our neighbour, prompts us to compaſſionate his ſorrow; in our own misfortune prompts us to reſtrain the abject and miſerable lamentations of our own ſorrow. The ſame principle or inſtinct which, in his proſperity and ſucceſs prompts us to congratulate his joy; in our own proſperity and ſucceſs prompts us to reſtrain the levity and intemperance of our own joy. In both caſes, the propriety of our own ſentiments and feelings ſeems to be exactly in proportion to the vivacity and force with which we enter into and conceive his ſentiments and feelings.

The man of the moſt perfect virtue, the man whom we naturally love and revere the moſt, is he who joins, to the moſt perfect command of his own original and ſelfiſh feelings, the moſt exquiſite ſenſibility both to the original and ſympathetic feelings of others. The man who, to all the ſoft, the amiable, and the gentle virtues, joins all the great, the awful, and the reſpectable, muſt ſurely be the natural and proper object of our higheſt love and admiration.

The perſon beſt fitted by nature for acquiring the former of thoſe two ſets of virtues, is likewiſe neceſſarily beſt fitted for acquiring the latter. The man who feels the moſt for the joys and ſorrows of others, is beſt fitted

for acquiring the moſt complete control of his own joys and ſorrows. The man of the moſt exquiſite humanity, is naturally the moſt capable of acquiring the higheſt degree of ſelf-command. He may not, however, always have acquired it; and it very frequently happens that he has not. He may have lived too much in eaſe and tranquillity. He may have never been expoſed to the violence of faction, or to the hardſhips and hazards of war. He may have never experienced the inſolence of his ſuperiors, the jealous and malignant envy of his equals, or the pilfering injuſtice of his inferiors. When, in an advanced age, ſome accidental change of fortune expoſes him to all theſe, they all make too great an impreſſion upon him. He has the diſpoſition which fits him for acquiring the moſt perfect ſelf-command; but he has never had the opportunity of acquiring it. Exerciſe and practice have been wanting; and without theſe no habit can ever be tolerably eſtabliſhed. Hardſhips, dangers, injuries, misfortunes, are the only maſters under whom we can learn the exerciſe of this virtue. But theſe are all maſters to whom nobody willingly puts himſelf to ſchool.

The ſituations in which the gentle virtue of humanity can be moſt happily cultivated, are

are by no means the ſame with thoſe which are beſt fitted for forming the auſtere virtue of ſelf-command. The man who is himſelf at eaſe can beſt attend to the diſtreſs of others. The man who is himſelf expoſed to hardſhips is moſt immediately called upon to attend to, and to control his own feelings. In the mild ſunſhine of undiſturbed tranquillity, in the calm retirement of undiſſipated and philoſophical leiſure, the ſoft virtue of humanity flouriſhes the moſt, and is capable of the higheſt improvement. But, in ſuch ſituations, the greateſt and nobleſt exertions of ſelf-command have little exerciſe. Under the boiſterous and ſtormy ſky of war and faction, of public tumult and confuſion, the ſturdy ſeverity of ſelf-command proſpers the moſt, and can be the moſt ſucceſsfully cultivated. But, in ſuch ſituations, the ſtrongeſt ſuggeſtions of humanity muſt frequently be ſtifled or neglected; and every ſuch neglect neceſſarily tends to weaken the principle of humanity. As it may frequently be the duty of a ſoldier not to take, ſo it may ſometimes be his duty not to give quarter; and the humanity of the man who has been ſeveral times under the neceſſity of ſubmitting to this diſagreeable duty, can ſcarce fail to ſuffer a conſiderable diminution. For his

own eaſe, he is too apt to learn to make light of the misfortunes which he is ſo often under the neceſſity of occaſioning; and the ſituations which call forth the nobleſt exertions of ſelf-command, by impoſing the neceſſity of violating ſometimes the property, and ſometimes the life of our neighbour, always tend to diminiſh, and too often to extinguiſh altogether, that ſacred regard to both, which is the foundation of juſtice and humanity. It is upon this account that we ſo frequently find in the world men of great humanity who have little ſelf-command, but who are indolent and irreſolute, and eaſily diſheartened, either by difficulty or danger, from the moſt honourable purſuits; and on the contrary, men of the moſt perfect ſelf-command, whom no difficulty can diſcourage, no danger appal, and who are at all times ready for the moſt daring and deſperate enterpriſes, but who, at the ſame time, ſeem to be hardened againſt all ſenſe either of juſtice or humanity.

In ſolitude, we are apt to feel too ſtrongly whatever relates to ourſelves: we are apt to over-rate the good offices we may have done, and the injuries we may have ſuffered: we are apt to be too much elated by our own good, and too much dejected by our own bad fortune.

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The converſation of a friend brings us to a better, that of a ſtranger to a ſtill better temper. The man within the breaſt, the abſtract and ideal ſpectator of our ſentiments and conduct, requires often to be awakened and put in mind of his duty by the preſence of the real ſpectator: and it is always from that ſpectator, from whom we can expect the leaſt ſympathy and indulgence, that we are likely to learn the moſt complete leſſon of ſelf-command.

Are you in adverſity? Do not mourn in the darkneſs of ſolitude, do not regulate your ſorrow according to the indulgent ſympathy of your intimate friends; return, as ſoon as poſſible, to the day-light of the world and of ſociety. Live with ſtrangers, with thoſe who know nothing, or care nothing about your misfortune; do not even ſhun the company of enemies; but give yourſelf the pleaſure of mortifying their malignant joy, by making them feel how little you are affected by your calamity, and how much you are above it.

Are you in proſperity? Do not confine the enjoyment of your good fortune to your own houſe, to the company of your own friends, perhaps of your flatterers, of thoſe who build upon your fortune the hopes of

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mending their own; frequent thoſe who are independent of you, who can value you only for your character and conduct, and not for your fortune. Neither ſeek nor ſhun, neither intrude yourſelf into nor run away from the ſociety of thoſe who were once your ſuperiors, and who may be hurt at finding you their equal, or, perhaps, even their ſuperior. The impertinence of their pride may, perhaps, render their company too diſagreeable: but if it ſhould not, be aſſured that it is the beſt company you can poſſibly keep; and if, by the ſimplicity of your unaſſuming demeanour, you can gain their favour and kindneſs, you may reſt ſatisfied that you are modeſt enough, and that your head has been in no reſpect turned by your good fortune.

The propriety of our moral ſentiments is never ſo apt to be corrupted, as when the indulgent and partial ſpectator is at hand, while the indifferent and impartial one is at a great diſtance.

Of the conduct of one independent nation towards another, neutral nations are the only indifferent and impartial ſpectators. But they are placed at ſo great a diſtance that they are almoſt quite out of ſight. When two nations are at variance, the citizen of each pays little regard to the ſentiments which

which foreign nations may entertain concerning his conduct. His whole ambition is to obtain the approbation of his own fellow-citizens; and as they are all animated by the ſame hoſtile paſſions which animate himſelf, he can never pleaſe them ſo much as by enraging and offending their enemies. The partial ſpectator is at hand: the impartial one at a great diſtance. in war and negociation, therefore, the laws of juſtice are very ſeldom obſerved. Truth and fair dealing are almoſt totally diſregarded. Treaties are violated; and the violation, if ſome advantage is gained by it, ſheds ſcarce any diſhonour upon the violator. The ambaſſador who dupes the miniſter of a foreign nation, is admired and applauded. The juſt man who diſdains either to take or to give any advantage, but who would think it leſs diſhonourable to give than to take one; the man who, in all private tranſactions, would be the moſt beloved and the moſt eſteemed; in thoſe public tranſactions is regarded as a fool and an ideot, who does not underſtand his buſineſs; and he incurs always the contempt, and ſometimes even the deteſtation of his fellow-citizens. In war, not only what are called the laws of nations are frequently violated, without bringing (among his own fellow-citizens,

citizens, whoſe judgments he only regards) any conſiderable diſhonour upon the violator; but thoſe laws themſelves are, the greater part of them, laid down with very little regard to the plaineſt and moſt obvious rules of juſtice. That the innocent, though they may have ſome connexion or dependence upon the guilty (which, perhaps, they themſelves cannot help), ſhould not, upon that account, ſuffer or be puniſhed for the guilty, is one of the plaineſt and moſt obvious rules of juſtice. In the moſt unjuſt war, however, it is commonly the ſovereign or the rulers only who are guilty. The ſubjects are almoſt always perfectly innocent. Whenever it ſuits the conveniency of a public enemy, however, the goods of the peaceable citizens are ſeized both at land and at ſea; their lands are laid waſte, their houſes are burnt, and they themſelves, if they preſume to make any reſiſtance, are murdered or led into captivity; and all this in the moſt perfect conformity to what are called the laws of nations.

The animoſity of hoſtile factions, whether civil or eccleſiaſtical, is often ſtill more furious than that of hoſtile nations; and their conduct towards one another is often ſtill more atrocious. What may be called the laws

laws of faction have often been laid down by grave authors with ſtill leſs regard to the rules of juſtice than what are called the laws of nations. The moſt ferocious patriot never ſtated it as a ſerious queſtion, Whether faith ought to be kept with public enemies?—Whether faith ought to be kept with rebels? Whether faith ought to be kept with heretics? are queſtions which have been often furiouſly agitated by celebrated doctors both civil and eccleſiaſtical. It is needleſs to obſerve, I preſume, that both rebels and heretics are thoſe unlucky perſons, who, when things have come to a certain degree of violence, have the misfortune to be of the weaker party. In a nation diſtracted by faction, there are, no doubt, always a few, though commonly but a very few, who preſerve their judgment untainted by the general contagion. They ſeldom amount to more than, here and there, a ſolitary individual, without any influence, excluded, by his own candour, from the confidence of either party, and who, though he may be one of the wiſeſt, is neceſſarily, upon that very account, one of the moſt inſignificant men in the ſociety. All ſuch people are held in contempt and deriſion, frequently in deteſtation, by the furious zealots of both parties. A true party-

party-man hates and deſpiſes candour; and, in reality, there is no vice which could ſo effectually diſqualify him for the trade of a party-man as that ſingle virtue. The real, revered, and impartial ſpectator, therefore, is, upon no occaſion, at a greater diſtance than amidſt the violence and rage of contending parties. To them, it may be ſaid, that ſuch a ſpectator ſcarce exiſts any where in the univerſe. Even to the great Judge of the univerſe, they impute all their own prejudices, and often view that Divine Being as animated by all their own vindictive and implacable paſſions. Of all the corrupters of moral ſentiments, therefore, faction and fanaticiſm have always been by far the greateſt.

Concerning the ſubject of ſelf-command, I ſhall only obſerve further, that our admiration for the man who, under the heavieſt and moſt unexpected misfortunes, continues to behave with fortitude and firmneſs, always ſuppoſes that his ſenſibility to thoſe misfortunes is very great, and ſuch as it requires a very great effort to conquer or command. The man who was altogether inſenſible to bodily pain, could deſerve no applauſe from enduring the torture with the moſt perfect patience and equanimity. The man who

had been created without the natural fear of death, could claim no merit from preſerving his coolneſs and preſence of mind in the midſt of the moſt dreadful dangers. It is one of the extravagancies of Seneca, that the Stoical wiſe man was, in this reſpect, ſuperior even to a God; that the ſecurity of the God was altogether the benefit of nature, which had exempted him from ſuffering; but that the ſecurity of the wiſe man was his own benefit, and derived altogether from himſelf and from his own exertions.

The ſenſibility of ſome men, however, to ſome of the objects which immediately affect themſelves, is ſometimes ſo ſtrong as to render all ſelf-command impoſſible. No ſenſe of honour can control the fears of the man who is weak enough to faint, or to fall into convulſions, upon the approach of danger. Whether ſuch weakneſs of nerves, as it has been called, may not, by gradual exerciſe and proper diſcipline, admit of ſome cure, may, perhaps, be doubtful. It ſeems certain that it ought never to be truſted or employed.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Nature of Self-deceit, and of the Origin and Uſe of general Rules.

IN order to pervert the rectitude of our own judgments concerning the propriety of our own conduct, it is not always neceſſary that the real and impartial ſpectator ſhould be at a great diſtance. When he is at hand, when he is preſent, the violence and injuſtice of our own ſelfiſh paſſions are ſometimes ſufficient to induce the man within the breaſt to make a report very different from what the real circumſtances of the caſe are capable of authorizing.

There are two different occaſions upon which we examine our own conduct, and endeavour to view it in the light in which the impartial ſpectator would view it: firſt, when we are about to act; and ſecondly, after we have acted. Our views are apt to be very partial in both caſes; but they are apt to be moſt partial when it is of moſt importance that they ſhould be otherwiſe.

When

When we are about to act, the eagerneſs of paſſion will ſeldom allow us to conſider what we are doing, with the candour of an indifferent perſon. The violent emotions which at that time agitate us, diſcolour our views of things, even when we are endeavouring to place ourſelves in the ſituation of another, and to regard the objects that intereſt us in the light in which they will naturally appear to him. The fury of our own paſſions conſtantly calls us back to our own place, where every thing appears magnified and miſrepreſented by ſelf-love. Of the manner in which thoſe objects would appear to another, of the view which he would take of them, we can obtain, if I may ſay ſo, but inſtantaneous glimpſes, which vaniſh in a moment, and which, even while they laſt, are not altogether juſt. We cannot even for that moment diveſt ourſelves entirely of the heat and keenneſs with which our peculiar ſituation inſpires us, nor conſider what we are about to do with the complete impartiality of an equitable judge. The paſſions, upon this account, as father Malebranche ſays, all juſtify themſelves, and ſeem reaſonable and proportioned to their objects, as long as we continue to feel them.

When the action is over, indeed, and the passions which prompted it have subsided, we can enter more coolly into the sentiments of the indifferent spectator. What before interested us is now become almost as indifferent to us as it always was to him, and we can now examine our own conduct with his candour and impartiality. The man of to-day is no longer agitated by the same passions which distracted the man of yesterday: and when the paroxysm of emotion, in the same manner as when the paroxysm of distress, is fairly over, we can identify ourselves, as it were, with the ideal man within the breast, and, in our own character, view, as in the one case, our own situation, so in the other, our own conduct, with the severe eyes of the most impartial spectator. But our judgments now are often of little importance in comparison of what they were before; and can frequently produce nothing but vain regret and unavailing repentance; without always securing us from the like errors in time to come. It is seldom, however, that they are quite candid even in this case. The opinion which we entertain of our own character depends entirely on our judgment concerning our past conduct. It is so disagreeable to think

think ill of ourſelves, that we often purpoſely turn away our view from thoſe circumſtances which might render that judgment unfavourable. He is a bold ſurgeon, they ſay, whoſe hand does not tremble when he performs an operation upon his own perſon; and he is often equally bold who does not heſitate to pull off the myſterious veil of ſelf-deluſion, which covers from his view the deformities of his own conduct. Rather than ſee our own behaviour under ſo diſagreeable an aſpect, we too often, fooliſhly and weakly, endeavour to exaſperate anew thoſe unjuſt paſſions which had formerly miſled us; we endeavour by artifice to awaken our old hatreds, and irritate afreſh our almoſt forgotten reſentments: we even exert ourſelves for this miſerable purpoſe, and thus perſevere in juſtice, merely becauſe we once were unjuſt, and becauſe we are aſhamed and afraid to ſee that we were ſo.

So partial are the views of mankind with regard to the propriety of their own conduct, both at the time of action and after it; and ſo difficult is it for them to view it in the light in which any indifferent ſpectator would conſider it. But if it was by a peculiar faculty, ſuch as the moral ſenſe is ſuppoſed to be, that they judged of their own conduct,

if they were endued with a particular power of perception, which diſtinguiſhed the beauty or deformity of paſſions and affections; as their own paſſions would be more immediately expoſed to the view of this faculty, it would judge with more accuracy concerning them, than concerning thoſe of other men, of which it had only a more diſtant proſpect.

This ſelf-deceit, this fatal weakneſs, of mankind, is the ſource of half the diſorders of human life. If we ſaw ourſelves in the light in which others ſee us, or in which they would ſee us if they knew all, a reformation would generally be unavoidable. We could not otherwiſe endure the ſight.

Nature, however, has not left this weakneſs, which is of ſo much importance, altogether without a remedy; nor has ſhe abandoned us entirely to the deluſions of ſelf-love. Our continual obſervations upon the conduct of others, inſenſibly lead us to form to ourſelves certain general rules concerning what is fit and proper either to be done or to be avoided. Some of their actions ſhock all our natural ſentiments. We hear every body about us expreſs the like deteſtation againſt them. This ſtill further confirms, and even exaſperates our natural ſenſe of their deformity. It ſatisfies us that we view them

them in the proper light, when we ſee other people view them in the ſame light. We reſolve never to be guilty of the like, nor ever, upon any account, to render ourſelves in this manner the objects of univerſal diſapprobation. We thus naturally lay down to ourſelves a general rule, that all ſuch actions are to be avoided, as tending to render us odious, contemptible, or puniſhable, the objects of all thoſe ſentiments for which we have the greateſt dread and averſion. Other actions, on the contrary, call forth our approbation, and we hear every body around us expreſs the ſame favourable opinion concerning them. Every body is eager to honour and reward them. They excite all thoſe ſentiments for which we have by nature the ſtrongeſt deſire; the love, the gratitude, the admiration of mankind. We become ambitious of performing the like; and thus naturally lay down to ourſelves a rule of another kind, that every opportunity of acting in this manner is carefully to be ſought after.

It is thus that the general rules of morality are formed. They are ultimately founded upon experience of what, in particular inſtances, our moral faculties, our natural ſenſe of merit and propriety, approve, or

diſapprove of. We do not originally approve or condemn particular actions; becauſe, upon examination, they appear to be agreeable or inconſiſtent with a certain general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, is formed, by finding from experience, that all actions of a certain kind, or circumſtanced in a certain manner, are approved or diſapproved of. To the man who firſt ſaw an inhuman murder, committed from avarice, envy, or unjuſt reſentment, and upon one too that loved and truſted the murderer, who beheld the laſt agonies of the dying perſon, who heard him with his expiring breath, complain more of the perfidy and ingratitude of his falſe friend, than of the violence which had been done to him, there could be no occaſion, in order to conceive how horrible ſuch an action was, that he ſhould reflect, that one of the moſt ſacred rules of conduct was what prohibited the taking away the life of an innocent perſon, that this was a plain violation of that rule, and conſequently a very blamable action. His deteſtation of this crime, it is evident, would ariſe inſtantaneouſly and antecedent to his having formed to himſelf any ſuch general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, which he might afterwards form, would be

founded upon the deteſtation which he felt neceſſarily ariſe in his own breaſt, at the thought of this, and every other particular action of the ſame kind.

When we read in hiſtory or romance, the account of actions either of generoſity or of baſeneſs, the admiration which we conceive for the one, and the contempt which we feel for the other, neither of them ariſe from reflecting that there are certain general rules which declare all actions of the one kind admirable, and all actions of the other contemptible. Thoſe general rules, on the contrary, are all formed from the experience we have had of the effects which actions of all different kinds naturally produce upon us.

An amiable action, a reſpectable action, an horrid action, are all of them actions which naturally excite for the perſon who performs them, the love, the reſpect, or the horror of the ſpectator. The general rules which determine what actions are, and what are not, the objects of each of thoſe ſentiments, can be formed no other way than by obſerving what actions actually and in fact excite them.

When theſe general rules, indeed, have been formed, when they are univerſally acknowledged and eſtabliſhed, by the concur-

ring ſentiments of mankind, we frequently appeal to them as to the ſtandards of judgment, in debating concerning the degree of praiſe or blame that is due to certain actions of a complicated and dubious nature. They are upon theſe occaſions commonly cited as the ultimate foundations of what is juſt and unjuſt in human conduct; and this circumſtance ſeems to have miſled ſeveral very eminent authors, to draw up their ſyſtems in ſuch a manner, as if they had ſuppoſed that the original judgments of mankind with regard to right and wrong, were formed like the deciſions of a court of judicatory, by conſidering firſt the general rule, and then, ſecondly, whether the particular action under conſideration fell properly within its comprehenſion.

Thoſe general rules of conduct, when they have been fixed in our mind by habitual reflection, are of great uſe in correcting the miſrepreſentations of ſelf-love concerning what is fit and proper to be done in our particular ſituation. The man of furious reſentment, if he was to liſten to the dictates of that paſſion, would perhaps regard the death of his enemy, as but a ſmall compenſation for the wrong, he imagines, he has received; which, however, may be no more than a very

very slight provocation. But his observations upon the conduct of others, have taught him how horrible all such sanguinary revenges appear. Unless his education has been very singular, he has laid it down to himself as an inviolable rule, to abstain from them upon all occasions. This rule preserves its authority with him, and renders him incapable of being guilty of such a violence. Yet the fury of his own temper may be such, that had this been the first time in which he considered such an action, he would undoubtedly have determined it to be quite just and proper, and what every impartial spectator would approve of. But that reverence for the rule which past experience has impressed upon him, checks the impetuosity of his passion, and helps him to correct the too partial views which self-love might otherwise suggest, of what was proper to be done in his situation. If he should allow himself to be so far transported by passion as to violate this rule, yet, even in this case, he cannot throw off altogether the awe and respect with which he has been accustomed to regard it. At the very time of acting, at the moment in which passion mounts the highest, he hesitates and trembles at the thought of what he is about to do: he is secretly conscious to himself that he

he is breaking through thoſe meaſures of conduct which, in all his cool hours, he had reſolved never to infringe, which he had never ſeen infringed by others without the higheſt diſapprobation, and of which the infringement, his own mind forebodes, muſt ſoon render him the object of the ſame diſagreeable ſentiments. Before he can take the laſt fatal reſolution, he is tormented with all the agonies of doubt and uncertainty; he is terrified at the thought of violating ſo ſacred a rule, and at the ſame time is urged and goaded on by the fury of his deſires to violate it. He changes his purpoſe every moment; ſometimes he reſolves to adhere to his principle, and not indulge a paſſion which may corrupt the remaining part of his life with the horrors of ſhame and repentance; and a momentary calm takes poſſeſſion of his breaſt, from the proſpect of that ſecurity and tranquillity which he will enjoy when he thus determines not to expoſe himſelf to the hazard of a contrary conduct. But immediately the paſſion rouſes anew, and with freſh fury drives him on to commit what he had the inſtant before reſolved to abſtain from. Wearied and diſtracted with thoſe continual irreſolutions, he at length, from a ſort of deſpair, makes the laſt fatal and

and irrecoverable ſtep; but with that terror and amazement with which one flying from an enemy throws himſelf over a precipice, where he is ſure of meeting with more certain deſtruction than from any thing that purſues him from behind. Such are his ſentiments even at the time of acting; though he is then, no doubt, leſs ſenſible of the impropriety of his own conduct than afterwards, when his paſſion being gratified and palled, he begins to view what he has done in the light in which others are apt to view it; and actually feels, what he had only foreſeen very imperfectly before, the ſtings of remorſe and repentance begin to agitate and torment him.

CHAP. V.

Of the influence and authority of the general Rules of Morality, and that they are juſtly regarded as the Laws of the Deity.

THE regard to thoſe general rules of conduct, is what is properly called a ſenſe of duty, a principle of the greateſt conſequence in human life, and the only principle by

by which the bulk of mankind are capable of directing their actions. Many men behave very decently, and through the whole of their lives avoid any conſiderable degree of blame, who yet, perhaps, never felt the ſentiment upon the propriety of which we found our approbation of their conduct, but acted merely from a regard to what they ſaw were the eſtabliſhed rules of behaviour. The man who has received great benefits from another perſon, may, by the natural coldneſs of his temper, feel but a very ſmall degree of the ſentiment of gratitude. If he has been virtuouſly educated, however, he will often have been made to obſerve how odious thoſe actions appear which denote a want of this ſentiment, and how amiable the contrary. Though the heart therefore is not warmed with any grateful affection, he will ſtrive to act as if it was, and will endeavour to pay all thoſe regards and attentions to his patron which the livelieſt gratitude could ſuggeſt. He will viſit him regularly; he will behave to him reſpectfully; he will never talk of him but with expreſſions of the higheſt eſteem, and of the many obligations which he owes to him. And what is more, he will carefully embrace every opportunity of making a proper return for paſt ſervices. He may

may do all this too without any hypocriſy or blamable diſſimulation without any ſelfiſh intention of obtaining new favours, and without any deſign of impoſing either upon his benefactor or the public. The motive of his actions may be no other than a reverence for the eſtabliſhed rule of duty, a ſerious and earneſt deſire of acting, in every reſpect, according to the law of gratitude. A wife, in the ſame manner, may ſometimes not feel that tender regard for her huſband which is ſuitable to the relation that ſubſiſts between them. If ſhe has been virtuouſly educated, however, ſhe will endeavour to act as if ſhe felt it, to be careful, officious, faithful, and ſincere, and to be deficient in none of thoſe attentions which the ſentiment of conjugal affection could have prompted her to perform. Such a friend, and ſuch a wife, are neither of them, undoubtedly, the very beſt of their kinds; and though both of them may have the moſt ſerious and earneſt deſire to fulfil every part of their duty, yet they will fail in many nice and delicate regards, they will miſs many opportunities of obliging which they could never have overlooked if they had poſſeſſed the ſentiment that is proper to their ſituation. Though not the very firſt of their kinds, however, they are perhaps

haps the ſecond; and if the regard to the general rules of conduct has been very ſtrongly impreſſed upon them, neither of them will fail in any very eſſential part of their duty. None but thoſe of the happieſt mould are capable of ſuiting with exact juſtneſs, their ſentiments and behaviour to the ſmalleſt difference of ſituation, and of acting upon all occaſions with the moſt delicate and accurate propriety. The coarſe clay of which the bulk of mankind are formed, cannot be wrought up to ſuch perfection. There is ſcarce any man, however, who by diſcipline, education, and example, may not be ſo impreſſed with a regard to general rules, as to act upon almoſt every occaſion with tolerable decency, and through the whole of his life to avoid any conſiderable degree of blame.

Without this ſacred regard to general rules, there is no man whoſe conduct can be much depended upon. It is this which conſtitutes the moſt eſſential difference between a man of principle and honour and a worthleſs fellow. The one adheres, on all occaſions, ſteadily and reſolutely to his maxims, and preſerves through the whole of his life one even tenour of conduct. The other acts variouſly and accidentally, as humour, inclination,

nation, or intereſt chance to be uppermoſt. Nay, ſuch are the inequalities of humour to which all men are ſubject, that without this principle, the man who, in all his cool hours, had the moſt delicate ſenſibility to the propriety of conduct, might often be led to act abſurdly upon the moſt frivolous occaſions, and when it was ſcarce poſſible to aſſign any ſerious motive for his behaving in this manner. Your friend makes you a viſit when you happen to be in a humour which makes it diſagreeable to receive him: in your preſent mood his civility is very apt to appear an impertinent intruſion; and if you were to give way to the views of things which at this time occur, though civil in your temper, you would behave to him with coldneſs and contempt. What renders you incapable of ſuch a rudeneſs, is nothing but a regard to the general rules of civility and hoſpitality, which prohibit it. That habitual reverence which your former experience has taught you for theſe, enables you to act, upon all ſuch occaſions, with nearly equal propriety, and hinders thoſe inequalities of temper, to which all men are ſubject, from influencing your conduct in any very ſenſible degree. But if without regard to theſe general rules, even the duties of politeneſs, which are ſo

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eaſily obſerved, and which one can ſcarce have any ſerious motive to violate, would yet be ſo frequently violated, what would become of the duties of juſtice, of truth, of chaſtity, of fidelity which it is often ſo difficult to obſerve, and which there may be ſo many ſtrong motives to violate? But upon the tolerable obſervance of theſe duties, depends the very exiſtence of human ſociety, which would crumble into nothing if mankind were not generally impreſſed with a reverence for thoſe important rules of conduct.

This reverence is ſtill further enhanced by an opinion which is firſt impreſſed by nature, and afterwards confirmed by reaſoning and philoſophy, that thoſe important rules of morality are the commands and laws of the Deity, who will finally reward the obedient, and puniſh the tranſgreſſors of their duty.

This opinion or apprehenſion, I ſay, ſeems firſt to be impreſſed by nature. Men are naturally led to aſcribe to thoſe myſterious beings, whatever they are, which happen, in any country, to be the objects of religious fear, all their own ſentiments and paſſions. They have no other, they can conceive no other to aſcribe to them. Thoſe unknown intelligences which they imagine but ſee not,

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muſt neceſſarily be formed with ſome ſort of reſemblance to thoſe intelligences of which they have experience. During the ignorance and darkneſs of pagan ſuperſtition, mankind ſeem to have formed the ideas of their divinities with ſo little delicacy, that they aſcribed to them, indiſcriminately, all the paſſions of human nature, thoſe not excepted which do the leaſt honour to our ſpecies, ſuch as luſt, hunger, avarice, envy, revenge. They could not fail, therefore, to aſcribe to thoſe beings, for the excellence of whoſe nature they ſtill conceived the higheſt admiration, thoſe ſentiments and qualities which are the great ornaments of humanity, and which ſeem to raiſe it to a reſemblance of divine perfection, the love of virtue and beneficence, and the abhorrence of vice and injuſtice. The man who was injured, called upon Jupiter to be witneſs of the wrong that was done to him, and could not doubt, but that divine being would behold it with the ſame indignation which would animate the meaneſt of mankind, who looked on when injuſtice was committed. The man who did the injury, felt himſelf to be the proper object of the deteſtation and reſentment of mankind; and his natural fears led him to impute the ſame ſentiments to thoſe awful

beings, whoſe preſence he could not avoid, and whoſe power he could not reſiſt. Theſe natural hopes and fears, and ſuſpicions, were propagated by ſympathy, and confirmed by education; and the gods were univerſally repreſented and believed to be the rewarders of humanity and mercy, and the avengers of perfidy and injuſtice. And thus religion, even in its rudeſt form, gave a ſanction to the rules of morality, long before the age of artificial reaſoning and philoſophy. That the terrors of religion ſhould thus enforce the natural ſenſe of duty, was of too much importance to the happineſs of mankind, for nature to leave it dependant upon the ſlowneſs and uncertainty of philoſophical reſearches.

Theſe reſearches, however, when they came to take place, confirmed thoſe original anticipations of nature. Upon whatever we ſuppoſe that our moral faculties are founded, whether upon a certain modification of reaſon, upon an original inſtinct, called a moral ſenſe, or upon ſome other principle of our nature, it cannot be doubted, that they were given us for the direction of our conduct in this life. They carry along with them the moſt evident badges of this authority, which denote that they were ſet up within us to be the ſupreme arbiters of all our actions, to ſuper-

ſuperintend all our ſenſes, paſſions, and appetites, and to judge how far each of them was either to be indulged or reſtrained. Our moral faculties are by no means, as ſome have pretended, upon a level in this reſpect with the other faculties and appetites of our nature, endowed with no more right to reſtrain theſe laſt, than theſe laſt are to reſtrain them. No other faculty or principle of action judges of any other. Love does not judge of reſentment, nor reſentment of love. Thoſe two paſſions may be oppoſite to one another, but cannot, with any propriety, be ſaid to approve or diſapprove of one another. But it is the peculiar office of thoſe faculties now under our conſideration to judge, to beſtow cenſure or applauſe upon all the other principles of our nature. They may be conſidered as a ſort of ſenſes of which thoſe principles are the objects. Every ſenſe is ſupreme over its own objects. There is no appeal from the eye with regard to the beauty of colours, nor from the ear with regard to the harmony of ſounds, nor from the taſte with regard to the agreeableneſs of flavours. Each of thoſe ſenſes judges in the laſt reſort of its own objects. Whatever gratifies the taſte is ſweet, whatever pleaſes the eye is beautiful, whatever ſoothes the

ear is harmonious. The very eſſence of each of thoſe qualities conſiſts in its being fitted to pleaſe the ſenſe to which it is addreſſed. It belongs to our moral faculties, in the ſame manner, to determine when the ear ought to be ſoothed, when the eye ought to be indulged, when the taſte ought to be gratified, when and how far every other principle of our nature ought either to be indulged or reſtrained. What is agreeable to our moral faculties, is fit and right, and proper to be done; the contrary, wrong, unfit, and improper. The ſentiments which they approve of, are graceful and becoming; the contrary, ungraceful and unbecoming. The very words, right, wrong, fit, improper, graceful, unbecoming, mean only what pleaſes or diſpleaſes thoſe faculties.

Since theſe, therefore, were plainly intended to be the governing principles of human nature, the rules which they preſcribe are to be regarded as the commands and laws of the Deity, promulgated by thoſe vicegerents which he has thus ſet up within us. All general rules are commonly denominated laws: thus the general rules which bodies obſerve in the communication of motion, are called the laws of motion. But thoſe general rules which our moral faculties obſerve

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in approving or condemning whatever ſentiment or action is ſubjected to their examination, may much more juſtly be denominated ſuch. They have a much greater reſemblance to what are properly called laws, thoſe general rules which the ſovereign lays down to direct the conduct of his ſubjects. Like them there are rules to direct the free actions of men: they are preſcribed moſt ſurely by a lawful ſuperior, and are attended too with the ſanction of rewards and puniſhments. Thoſe vicegerents of God within us, never fail to puniſh the violation of them, by the torments of inward ſhame, and ſelf-condemnation; and on the contrary, always reward obedience with tranquillity of mind, with contentment, and ſelf-ſatisfaction.

There are innumerable other conſiderations which ſerve to confirm the ſame concluſion. The happineſs of mankind, as well as of all other rational creatures, ſeems to have been the original purpoſe intended by the Author of nature, when he brought them into exiſtence. No other end ſeems worthy of that ſupreme wiſdom and divine benignity which we neceſſarily aſcribe to him; and this opinion, which we are led to by the abſtract conſideration of his infinite perfections, is ſtill more confirmed by the examination of

the works of nature, which ſeem all intended to promote happineſs, and to guard againſt miſery. But by acting according to the dictates of our moral faculties, we neceſſarily purſue the moſt effectual means for promoting the happineſs of mankind, and may therefore be ſaid, in ſome ſenſe, to co-operate with the Deity, and to advance as far as in our power the plan of Providence. By acting otherwiſe, on the contrary, we ſeem to obſtruct, in ſome meaſure, the ſcheme which the Author of Nature has eſtabliſhed for the happineſs and perfection of the world, and to declare ourſelves, if I may ſay ſo, in ſome meaſure the enemies of God. Hence we are naturally encouraged to hope for his extraordinary favour and reward in the one caſe, and to dread his vengeance and puniſhment in the other.

There are beſides many other reaſons, and many other natural principles, which all tend to confirm and inculcate the ſame ſalutary doctrine. If we conſider the general rules by which external proſperity and adverſity are commonly diſtributed in this life, we ſhall find, that notwithſtanding the diſorder in which all things appear to be in this world, yet even here every virtue naturally meets with its proper reward, with the recompenſe

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which is moſt fit to encourage and promote it; and this too ſo ſurely, that it requires a very extraordinary concurrence of circumſtances entirely to diſappoint it. What is the reward moſt proper for encouraging induſtry, prudence, and circumſpection? Succeſs in every ſort of buſineſs. And is it poſſible that in the whole of life theſe virtues ſhould fail of attaining it? Wealth and external honours are their proper recompenſe, and the recompenſe which they can ſeldom fail of acquiring. What reward is moſt proper for promoting the practice of truth, juſtice, and humanity? The confidence, the eſteem, and love of thoſe we live with. Humanity does not deſire to be great, but to be beloved. It is not in being rich that truth and juſtice would rejoice, but in being truſted and believed, recompenſes which thoſe virtues muſt almoſt always acquire. By ſome very extraordinary and unlucky circumſtance, a good man may come to be ſuſpected of a crime of which he was altogether incapable, and upon that account be moſt unjuſtly expoſed for the remaining part of his life to the horror and averſion of mankind. By an accident of this kind he may be ſaid to loſe his all, notwithſtanding his integrity and juſtice; in the ſame manner as a cautious man, notwithſtanding

his utmoſt circumſpection, may be ruined by an earthquake or an inundation. Accidents of the firſt kind, however, are perhaps ſtill more rare, and ſtill more contrary to the common courſe of things than thoſe of the ſecond; and it ſtill remains true, that the practice of truth, juſtice, and humanity is a certain and almoſt infallible method of acquiring what thoſe virtues chiefly aim at, the confidence and love of thoſe we live with. A perſon may be very eaſily miſrepreſented with regard to a particular action; but it is ſcarce poſſible that he ſhould be ſo with regard to the general tenor of his conduct. An innocent man may be believed to have done wrong: this, however, will rarely happen. On the contrary, the eſtabliſhed opinion of the innocence of his manners will often lead us to abſolve him where he has really been in the fault, notwithſtanding very ſtrong preſumptions. A knave, in the ſame manner, may eſcape cenſure, or even meet with applauſe, for a particular knavery, in which his conduct is not underſtood. But no man was ever habitually ſuch, without being almoſt univerſally known to be ſo, and without being even frequently ſuſpected of guilt, when he was in reality perfectly innocent. And ſo far as vice and virtue can be either

either punished or rewarded by the sentiments and opinions of mankind, they both, according to the common course of things, meet even here with something more than exact and impartial justice.

But though the general rules by which prosperity and adversity are commonly distributed, when considered in this cool and philosophical light, appear to be perfectly suited to the situation of mankind in this life, yet they are by no means suited to some of our natural sentiments. Our natural love and admiration for some virtues is such, that we should wish to bestow on them all sorts of honours and rewards, even those which we must acknowledge to be the proper recompenses of other qualities, with which those virtues are not always accompanied. Our detestation, on the contrary, for some vices is such, that we should desire to heap upon them every sort of disgrace and disaster, those not excepted which are the natural consequences of very different qualities. Magnanimity, generosity, and justice command so high a degree of admiration, that we desire to see them crowned with wealth, and power, and honours of every kind, the natural consequences of prudence, industry, and application; qualities with which those virtues are

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not inſeparably connected. Fraud, falſehood, brutality, and violence, on the other hand, excite in every human breaſt ſuch ſcorn and abhorrence, that our indignation rouſes to ſee them poſſeſs thoſe advantages which they may in ſome ſenſe be ſaid to have merited, by the diligence and induſtry with which they are ſometimes attended. The induſtrious knave cultivates the ſoil; the indolent good man leaves it uncultivated. Who ought to reap the harveſt? Who ſtarve, and who live in plenty? The natural courſe of things decides it in favour of the knave: the natural ſentiments of mankind in favour of the man of virtue. Man judges, that the good qualities of the one are greatly over-recompenſed by thoſe advantages which they tend to procure him, and that the omiſſions of the other are by far too ſeverely puniſhed by the diſtreſs which they naturally bring upon him; and human laws, the conſequences of human ſentiments, forfeit the life and the eſtate of the induſtrious and cautious traitor, and reward, by extraordinary recompenſes, the fidelity and public ſpirit of the improvident and careleſs good citizen. Thus man is by Nature directed to correct, in ſome meaſure, that diſtribution of things which ſhe herſelf would otherwiſe have made. The rules which for this

this purpoſe ſhe prompts him to follow, are different from thoſe which ſhe herſelf obſerves. She beſtows upon every virtue, and upon every vice, that preciſe reward or puniſhment which is beſt fitted to encourage the one, or to reſtrain the other. She is directed by this ſole conſideration, and pays little regard to the different degrees of merit and demerit, which they may ſeem to poſſeſs in the ſentiments and paſſions of man. Man, on the contrary, pays regard to this only, and would endeavour to render the ſtate of every virtue preciſely proportioned to that degree of love and eſteem, and of every vice to that degree of contempt and abhorrence, which he himſelf conceives for it. The rules which ſhe follows are fit for her, thoſe which he follows for him: but both are calculated to promote the ſame great end, the order of the world, and the perfection and happineſs of human nature.

But though man is thus employed to alter that diſtribution of things which natural events would make, if left to themſelves; though, like the gods of the poets, he is perpetually interpoſing, by extraordinary means, in favour of virtue, and in oppoſition to vice, and, like them, endeavours to turn away the arrow that is aimed at the head of the righteous,

eous, but to accelerate the ſword of deſtruction that is lifted up againſt the wicked; yet he is by no means able to render the fortune of either quite ſuitable to his own ſentiments and wiſhes. The natural courſe of things cannot be entirely controlled by the impotent endeavours of man: the current is too rapid and too ſtrong for him to ſtop it; and though the rules which direct it appear to have been eſtabliſhed for the wiſeſt and beſt purpoſes, they ſometimes produce effects which ſhock all his natural ſentiments. That a great combination of men ſhould prevail over a ſmall one; that thoſe who engage in an enterpriſe with forethought and all neceſſary preparation, ſhould prevail over ſuch as oppoſe them without any; and that every end ſhould be acquired by thoſe means only which Nature has eſtabliſhed for acquiring it, ſeems to be a rule not only neceſſary and unavoidable in itſelf, but even uſeful and proper for rouſing the induſtry and attention of mankind. Yet when, in conſequence of this rule, violence and artifice prevail over ſincerity and juſtice, what indignation does it not excite in the breaſt of every human ſpectator? What ſorrow and compaſſion for the ſufferings of the innocent, and what furious reſentment againſt the ſucceſs of the oppreſſor? We are

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equally grieved and enraged at the wrong that is done, but often find it altogether out of our power to redreſs it. When we thus deſpair of finding any force upon earth which can check the triumph of injuſtice, we naturally appeal to heaven, and hope that the great Author of our nature will himſelf execute hereafter, what all the principles which he has given us for the direction of our conduct, prompt us to attempt even here; that he will complete the plan which he himſelf has thus taught us to begin; and will, in a life to come, render to every one according to the works which he has performed in this world. And thus we are led to the belief of a future ſtate, not only by the weakneſſes, by the hopes and fears of human nature, but by the nobleſt and beſt principles which belong to it, by the love of virtue, and by the abhorrence of vice and injuſtice.

"Does it ſuit the greatneſs of God," ſays the eloquent and philoſophical biſhop of Clermont, with that paſſionate and exaggerating force of imagination, which ſeems ſometimes to exceed the bounds of decorum; "does it ſuit the greatneſs of God, to leave "the world which he has created in ſo uni- "verſal a diſorder? To ſee the wicked pre- "vail almoſt always over the juſt; the inno-

" cent dethroned by the uſurper; the father
" become the victim of the ambition of an
" unnatural ſon; the huſband expiring un-
" der the ſtroke of a barbarous and faithleſs
" wife? From the height of his greatneſs
" ought God to behold thoſe melancholy
" events as a fantaſtical amuſement, without
" taking any ſhare in them? Becauſe he is
" great, ſhould he be weak, or unjuſt, or
" barbarous? Becauſe men are little, ought
" they to be allowed either to be diſſolute
" without puniſhment, or virtuous without
" reward? O God! if this is the character of
" your Supreme Being, if it is you whom
" we adore under ſuch dreadful ideas; I can
" no longer acknowledge you for my father,
" for my protector, for the comforter of my
" ſorrow, the ſupport of my weakneſs, the
" rewarder of my fidelity. You would then
" be no more than an indolent and fantaſti-
" cal tyrant, who ſacrifices mankind to his
" inſolent vanity, and who has brought them
" out of nothing, only to make them ſerve
" for the ſport of his leiſure and of his ca-
" price."

When the general rules which determine the merit and demerit of actions, come thus to be regarded as the laws of an All-powerful Being, who watches over our conduct, and who,

who, in a life to come, will reward the obſervance, and puniſh the breach of them; they neceſſarily acquire a new ſacredneſs from this conſideration. That our regard to the will of the Deity ought to be the ſupreme rule of our conduct, can be doubted of by nobody who believes his exiſtence. The very thought of diſobedience appears to involve in it the moſt ſhocking impropriety. How vain, how abſurd would it be for man, either to oppoſe or to neglect the commands that were laid upon him by Infinite Wiſdom, and Infinite Power! How unnatural, how impiouſly ungrateful not to reverence the precepts that were preſcribed to him by the infinite goodneſs of his Creator, even though no puniſhment was to follow their violation! The ſenſe of propriety too is here well ſupported by the ſtrongeſt motives of ſelf-intereſt. The idea that, however we may eſcape the obſervation of man, or be placed above the reach of human puniſhment, yet we are always acting under the eye, and expoſed to the puniſhment of God, the great avenger of injuſtice, is a motive capable of reſtraining the moſt headſtrong paſſions, with thoſe at leaſt who, by conſtant reflection, have rendered it familiar to them.

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It is in this manner that religion enforces the natural ſenſe of duty: and hence it is, that mankind are generally diſpoſed to place great confidence in the probity of thoſe who ſeem deeply impreſſed with religious ſentiments. Such perſons, they imagine, act under an additional tie, beſides thoſe which regulate the conduct of other men. The regard to the propriety of action, as well as to reputation, the regard to the applauſe of his own breaſt, as well as to that of others, are motives which they ſuppoſe have the ſame influence over the religious man, as over the man of the world. But the former lies under another reſtraint, and never acts deliberately but as in the preſence of that Great Superior who is finally to recompenſe him according to his deeds. A greater truſt is repoſed, upon this account, in the regularity and exactneſs of his conduct. And wherever the natural principles of religion are not corrupted by the factious and party zeal of ſome worthleſs cabal; wherever the firſt duty which it requires, is to fulfil all the obligations of morality; wherever men are not taught to regard frivolous obſervances, as more immediate duties of religion, than acts of juſtice and beneficence; and to imagine,

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that by ſacrifices, and ceremonies, and vain ſupplications, they can bargain with the Deity for fraud, and perfidy, and violence, the world undoubtedly judges right in this reſpect; and juſtly places a double confidence in the rectitude of the religious man's behaviour.

CHAP. VI.

In what caſes the Senſe of Duty ought to be the ſole principle of our conduct; and in what caſes it ought to concur with other motives.

RELIGION affords ſuch ſtrong motives to the practice of virtue, and guards us by ſuch powerful reſtraints from the temptations of vice, that many have been led to ſuppoſe, that religious principles were the ſole laudable motives of action. We ought neither, they ſaid, to reward from gratitude, nor puniſh from reſentment; we ought neither to protect the helpleſſneſs of our children, nor afford ſupport to the infirmities of our parents, from natural affection. All affections for particular objects ought to be extinguiſhed in our breaſt, and one great affection take the

place of all others, the love of the Deity, the desire of rendering ourselves agreeable to him, and of directing our conduct, in every respect, according to his will. We ought not to be grateful from gratitude, we ought not to be charitable from humanity, we ought not to be public-spirited from the love of our country, nor generous and just from the love of mankind. The sole principle and motive of our conduct in the performance of all those different duties, ought to be a sense that God has commanded us to perform them. I shall not at present take time to examine this opinion particularly; I shall only observe, that we should not have expected to have found it entertained by any sect, who professed themselves of a religion in which, as it is the first precept to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength, so it is the second to love our neighbour as we love ourselves; and we love ourselves surely for our own sakes, and not merely because we are commanded to do so. That the sense of duty should be the sole principle of our conduct, is nowhere the precept of Christianity; but that it should be the ruling and the governing one, as philosophy, and as, indeed, common sense, directs. It may be a question, however,

however, in what cases our actions ought to arise chiefly or entirely from a sense of duty, or from a regard to general rules; and in what cases some other sentiment or affection ought to concur, and have a principal influence.

The decision of this question, which cannot, perhaps, be given with any very great accuracy, will depend upon two different circumstances; first, upon the natural agreeableness or deformity of the sentiment or affection which would prompt us to any action independent of all regard to general rules; and, secondly, upon the precision and exactness, or the looseness and inaccuracy, of the general rules themselves.

I. First, I say, it will depend upon the natural agreeableness or deformity of the affection itself, how far our actions ought to arise from it, or entirely proceed from a regard to the general rule.

All those graceful and admired actions, to which the benevolent affections would prompt us, ought to proceed as much from the passions themselves, as from any regard to the general rules of conduct. A benefactor thinks himself but ill requited, if the person upon whom he has bestowed his good offices, repays them merely from a cold sense of

duty, and without any affection to his perſon. A huſband is diſſatisfied with the moſt obedient wife, when he imagines her conduct is animated by no other principle beſides her regard to what the relation ſhe ſtands in requires. Though a ſon ſhould fail in none of the offices of filial duty, yet if he wants that affectionate reverence which it ſo well becomes him to feel, the parent may juſtly complain of his indifference. Nor could a ſon be quite ſatisfied with a parent who, though he performed all the duties of his ſituation, had nothing of that fatherly fondneſs which might have been expected from him. With regard to all ſuch benevolent and ſocial affections, it is agreeable to ſee the ſenſe of duty employed rather to reſtrain than to enliven them, rather to hinder us from doing too much, than to prompt us to do what we ought. It gives us pleaſure to ſee a father obliged to check his own fondneſs, a friend obliged to ſet bounds to his natural generoſity, a perſon who has received a benefit, obliged to reſtrain the too ſanguine gratitude of his own temper.

The contrary maxim takes place with regard to the malevolent and unſocial paſſions. We ought to reward from the gratitude and generoſity of our own hearts, without any reluctance,

reluctance, and without being obliged to reflect how great the propriety of rewarding: but we ought always to punish with reluctance, and more from a sense of the propriety of punishing, than from any savage disposition to revenge. Nothing is more graceful than the behaviour of the man who appears to resent the greatest injuries, more from a sense that they deserve, and are the proper objects of resentment, than from feeling himself the furies of that disagreeable passion; who, like a judge, considers only the general rule, which determines what vengeance is due for each particular offence; who, in executing that rule, feels less for what himself has suffered, than for what the offender is about to suffer; who, though in wrath, remembers mercy, and is disposed to interpret the rule in the most gentle and favourable manner, and to allow all the alleviations which the most candid humanity could, consistently with good sense, admit of.

As the selfish passions, according to what has formerly been observed, hold, in other respects, a sort of middle place, between the social and unsocial affections, so do they likewise in this. The pursuit of the objects of private interest, in all common, little, and

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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ordinary caſes, ought to flow rather from a regard to the general rules which preſcribe ſuch conduct, than from any paſſion for the objects themſelves; but upon more important and extraordinary occaſions, we ſhould be awkward, inſipid, and ungraceful, if the objects themſelves did not appear to animate us with a conſiderable degree of paſſion. To be anxious, or to be laying a plot either to gain or to ſave a ſingle ſhilling, would degrade the moſt vulgar tradeſman in the opinion of all his neighbours. Let his circumſtances be ever ſo mean, no attention to any ſuch ſmall matters, for the ſake of the things themſelves, muſt appear in his conduct. His ſituation may require the moſt ſevere œconomy and the moſt exact aſſiduity: but each particular exertion of that œconomy and aſſiduity muſt proceed, not ſo much from a regard for that particular ſaving or gain, as for the general rule which to him preſcribes, with the utmoſt rigour, ſuch a tenor of conduct. His parſimony to-day muſt not ariſe from a deſire of the particular three-pence which he will ſave by it, nor his attendance in his ſhop from a paſſion for the particular ten-pence which he will acquire by it: both the one and the other ought to proceed ſolely from a regard to the general rule, which preſcribes,

ſcribes, with the moſt unrelenting ſeverity, this plan of conduct to all perſons in his way of life. In this conſiſts the difference between the character of a miſer and that of a perſon of exact œconomy and aſſiduity. The one is anxious about ſmall matters for their own ſake; the other attends to them only in conſequence of the ſcheme of life which he has laid down to himſelf.

It is quite otherwiſe with regard to the more extraordinary and important objects of ſelf-intereſt. A perſon appears mean-ſpirited, who does not purſue theſe with ſome degree of earneſtneſs for their own ſake. We ſhould deſpiſe a prince who was not anxious about conquering or defending a province. We ſhould have very little reſpect for a private gentleman who did not exert himſelf to gain an eſtate, or even a conſiderable office, when he could acquire them without either meanneſs or injuſtice. A member of parliament who ſhews no keenneſs about his own election, is abandoned by his friends, as altogether unworthy of their attachment. Even a tradeſman is thought a poor-ſpirited fellow among his neighbours, who does not beſtir himſelf to get what they call an extraordinary job, or ſome uncommon advantage. This ſpirit and keenneſs conſtitutes the differ-

ence between the man of enterprife and the man of dull regularity. Thofe great objects of felf-intereft, of which the lofs or acquifition quite changes the rank of the perfon, are the objects of the paffion properly called ambition; a paffion, which when it keeps within the bounds of prudence and juftice, is always admired in the world, and has even fometimes a certain irregular greatnefs, which dazzles the imagination, when it paffes the limits of both thefe virtues, and is not only unjuft but extravagant. Hence the general admiration for heroes and conquerors, and even for ftatefmen, whofe projects have been very daring and extenfive, though altogether devoid of juftice; fuch as thofe of the Cardinals of Richlieu and of Retz. The objects of avarice and ambition differ only in their greatnefs. A mifer is as furious about a halfpenny, as a man of ambition about the conqueft of a kingdom.

II. Secondly, I fay, it will depend partly upon the precifion and exactnefs, or the loofenefs and inaccuracy of the general rules themfelves, how far our conduct ought to proceed entirely from a regard to them.

The general rules of almoft all the virtues, the general rules which determine what are the offices of prudence, of charity, of generofity,

rosity, of gratitude, of friendship, are in many respects loose and inaccurate, admit of many exceptions, and require so many modifications, that it is scarce possible to regulate our conduct entirely by a regard to them. The common proverbial maxims of prudence, being founded in universal experience, are perhaps the best general rules which can be given about it. To affect, however, a very strict and literal adherence to them would evidently be the most absurd and ridiculous pedantry. Of all the virtues I have just now mentioned, gratitude is that, perhaps, of which the rules are the most precise, and admit of the fewest exceptions. That as soon as we can we should make a return of equal, and if possible of superior value to the services we have received, would seem to be a pretty plain rule, and one which admitted of scarce any exceptions. Upon the most superficial examination, however, this rule will appear to be in the highest degree loose and inaccurate, and to admit of ten thousand exceptions. If your benefactor attended you in your sickness, ought you to attend him in his? or can you fulfil the obligation of gratitude, by making a return of a different kind? If you ought to attend him, how long ought you to attend him? The

same

ſame time which he attended you, or longer, and how much longer? If your friend lent you money in your diſtreſs, ought you to lend him money in his? How much ought you to lend him? When ought you to lend him? Now, or to-morrow, nor next month? And for how long a time? It is evident, that no general rule can be laid down, by which a preciſe anſwer can, in all caſes, be given to any of theſe queſtions. The difference between his character and yours, between his circumſtances and yours, may be ſuch, that you may be perfectly grateful, and juſtly refuſe to lend him a halfpenny: and, on the contrary, you may be willing to lend, or even to give him ten times the ſum which he lent you, and yet juſtly be accuſed of the blackeſt ingratitude, and of not having fulfilled the hundredth part of the obligation you lie under. As the duties of gratitude, however, are perhaps the moſt ſacred of all thoſe which the beneficent virtues preſcribe to us, ſo the general rules which determine them are, as I ſaid before, the moſt accurate. Thoſe which aſcertain the actions required by friendſhip, humanity, hoſpitality, generoſity, are ſtill more vague and indeterminate.

There is, however, one virtue of which the general rules determine with the greateſt exactneſs every external action which it requires. This virtue is juſtice. The rules of juſtice are accurate in the higheſt degree, and admit of no exceptions or modifications, but ſuch as may be aſcertained as accurately as the rules themſelves, and which generally, indeed, flow from the very ſame principles with them. If I owe a man ten pounds, juſtice requires that I ſhould preciſely pay him ten pounds, either at the time agreed upon, or when he demands it. What I ought to perform, how much I ought to perform, when and where I ought to perform it, the whole nature and circumſtances of the action preſcribed, are all of them preciſely fixt and determined. Though it may be awkward and pedantic, therefore, to affect too ſtrict an adherence to the common rules of prudence or generoſity, there is no pedantry in ſticking faſt by the rules of juſtice. On the contrary, the moſt ſacred regard is due to them; and the actions which this virtue requires are never ſo properly performed, as when the chief motive for performing them is a reverential and religious regard to thoſe general rules which require them. In the practice of the other

virtues,

virtues, our conduct ſhould rather be directed by a certain idea of propriety, by a certain taſte for a particular tenor of conduct, than by any regard to a preciſe maxim or rule; and we ſhould conſider the end and foundation of the rule, more than the rule itſelf. But it is otherwiſe with regard to juſtice: the man who in that refines the leaſt, and adheres with the moſt obſtinate ſteadfaſtneſs to the general rules themſelves, is the moſt commendable, and the moſt to be depended upon. Though the end of the rules of juſtice be, to hinder us from hurting our neighbour, it may frequently be a crime to violate them, though we could pretend, with ſome pretext of reaſon, that this particular violation could do no hurt. A man often becomes a villain the moment he begins, even in his own heart to chicane in this manner. The moment he thinks of departing from the moſt ſtaunch and poſitive adherence to what thoſe inviolable precepts preſcribe to him, he is no longer to be truſted, and no man can ſay what degree of guilt he may not arrive at. The thief imagines he does no evil, when he ſteals from the rich, what he ſuppoſes they may eaſily want, and what poſſibly they may never even know has been ſtolen from them. The adulterer imagines he does

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no evil, when he corrupts the wife of his friend, provided he covers his intrigue from the ſuſpicion of the huſband, and does not diſturb the peace of the family. When once we begin to give way to ſuch refinements, there is no enormity ſo groſs of which we may not be capable.

The rules of juſtice may be compared to the rules of grammar; the rules of the other virtues, to the rules which critics lay down for the attainment of what is ſublime and elegant in compoſition. The one, are preciſe, accurate and indiſpenſable. The other, are looſe, vague, and indeterminate, and preſent us rather with a general idea of the perfection we ought to aim at, than afford us any certain and infallible directions for acquiring it. A man may learn to write grammatically by rule, with the moſt abſolute infallibility; and ſo, perhaps, he may be taught to act juſtly. But there are no rules whoſe obſervance will infallibly lead us to the attainment of elegance or ſublimity in writing: though there are ſome which may help us, in ſome meaſure, to correct and aſcertain the vague ideas which we might otherwiſe have entertained of thoſe perfections. And there are no rules by the knowledge of which we can infallibly be taught

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to act upon all occaſions with prudence, with juſt magnanimity, or proper beneficence: though there are ſome which may enable us to correct and aſcertain, in ſeveral reſpects, the imperfect ideas which we might otherwiſe have entertained of thoſe virtues.

It may ſometimes happen, that with the moſt ſerious and earneſt deſire of acting ſo as to deſerve approbation, we may miſtake the proper rules of conduct, and thus be miſled by that very principle which ought to direct us. It is in vain to expect, that in this caſe mankind ſhould entirely approve of our behaviour. They cannot enter into that abſurd idea of duty which influenced us, nor go along with any of the actions which follow from it. There is ſtill, however, ſomething reſpectable in the character and behaviour of one who is thus betrayed into vice, by a wrong ſenſe of duty, or by what is called an erroneous conſcience. How fatally ſoever he may be miſled by it, he is ſtill, with the generous and humane, more the object of commiſeration than of hatred or reſentment. They lament the weakneſs of human nature, which expoſes us to ſuch unhappy deluſions, even while we are moſt ſincerely labouring after perfection, and endeavouring

vouring to act according to the beſt principle which can poſſibly direct us. Falſe notions of religion are almoſt the only cauſes which can occaſion any very groſs perverſion of our natural ſentiments in this way; and that principle which gives the greateſt authority to the rules of duty, is alone capable of diſtorting our ideas of them in any conſiderable degree. In all other caſes common ſenſe is ſufficient to direct us, if not to the moſt exquiſite propriety of conduct, yet to ſomething which is not very far from it; and provided we are in earneſt deſirous to do well, our behaviour will always, upon the whole, be praiſe-worthy. That to obey the will of the Deity, is the firſt rule of duty, all men are agreed. But concerning the particular commandments which that will may impoſe upon us, they differ widely from one another. In this, therefore, the greateſt mutual forbearance and toleration is due; and though the defence of ſociety requires that crimes ſhould be puniſhed, from whatever motives they proceed, yet a good man will always puniſh them with reluctance, when they evidently proceed from falſe notions of religious duty. He will never feel againſt thoſe who commit them that indignation which he feels againſt other criminals, but will rather regret,

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MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

CSL

and ſometimes even admire their unfortunate firmneſs and magnanimity, at the very time that he puniſhes their crime. In the tragedy of Mahomet, one of the fineſt of Mr. Voltaire's, it is well repreſented, what ought to be our ſentiments for crimes which proceed from ſuch motives. In that tragedy, two young people of different ſexes, of the moſt innocent and virtuous diſpoſitions, and without any other weakneſs except what endears them the more to us, a mutual fondneſs for one another, are inſtigated by the ſtrongeſt motives of a falſe religion, to commit a horrid murder, that ſhocks all the principles of human nature. A venerable old man, who had expreſſed the moſt tender affection for them both, for whom, notwithſtanding he was the avowed enemy of their religion, they had both conceived the higheſt reverence and eſteem, and who was in reality their father, though they did not know him to be ſuch, is pointed out to them as a ſacrifice which God had expreſsly required at their hands, and they are commanded to kill him. While they are about executing this crime they are tortured with all the agonies which can ariſe from the ſtruggle between the idea of the indiſpenſableneſs of religious duty on the one ſide, and compaſſion, gratitude, reverence for the age,

and

and love for the humanity and virtue of the perſon whom they are going to deſtroy, on the other. The repreſentation of this exhibits one of the moſt intereſting, and perhaps the moſt inſtructive ſpectacle that was ever introduced upon any theatre. The ſenſe of duty, however, at laſt prevails over all the amiable weakneſſes of human nature. They execute the crime impoſed upon them; but immediately diſcover their error, and the fraud which had deceived them, and are diſtracted with horror, remorſe, and reſentment. Such as are our ſentiments for the unhappy Seid and Palmira, ſuch ought we to feel for every perſon who is in this manner miſled by religion, when we are ſure that it is really religion which miſleads him, and not the pretence of it, which is made a cover to ſome of the worſt of human paſſions.

As a perſon may act wrong by following a wrong ſenſe of duty, ſo nature may ſometimes prevail, and lead him to act right in oppoſition to it. We cannot in this caſe be diſpleaſed to ſee that motive prevail, which we think ought to prevail, though the perſon himſelf is ſo weak as to think otherwiſe. As his conduct, however, is the effect of weakneſs, not principle, we are far

from beſtowing upon it any thing that approaches to complete approbation. A bigotted Roman Catholic, who, during the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, had been ſo overcome by compaſſion, as to ſave ſome unhappy Proteſtants, whom he thought it his duty to deſtroy, would not ſeem to be entitled to that high applauſe which we ſhould have beſtowed upon him, had he exerted the ſame generoſity with complete ſelf-approbation. We might be pleaſed with the humanity of his temper, but we ſhould ſtill regard him with a ſort of pity which is altogether inconſiſtent with the admiration that is due to perfect virtue. It is the ſame caſe with all the other paſſions. We do not diſlike to ſee them exert themſelves properly, even when a falſe notion of duty would direct the perſon to reſtrain them. A very devout Quaker, who upon being ſtruck upon one cheek, inſtead of turning up the other, ſhould ſo far forget his literal interpretation of our Saviour's precept, as to beſtow ſome good diſcipline upon the brute that inſulted him, would not be diſagreeable to us. We ſhould laugh and be diverted with his ſpirit, and rather like him the better for it. But we ſhould by no means regard him with that reſpect and eſteem which would ſeem

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due to one who, upon a like occaſion, had acted properly from a juſt ſenſe of what was proper to be done. No action can properly be called virtuous, which is not accompanied with the ſentiment of ſelf-approbation.

373
CSL

THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS.

PART IV.

Of the EFFECT of UTILITY upon the Sentiment of Approbation.

Conſiſting of one SECTION.

CHAP. I.

Of the beauty which the appearance of UTILITY *beſtows upon all the productions of art, and of the extenſive influence of this ſpecies of Beauty.*

THAT utility is one of the principal ſources of beauty has been obſerved by every body, who has conſidered with any attention what conſtitutes the nature of beauty. The conveniency of a houſe gives

MINISTRY OF CULTURE · GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
374

CSL

pleaſure to the ſpectator as well as its regularity, and he is as much hurt when he obſerves the contrary defect, as when he ſees the correſpondent windows of different forms, or the door not placed exactly in the middle of the building. That the fitneſs of any ſyſtem or machine to produce the end for which it was intended, beſtows a certain propriety and beauty upon the whole, and renders the very thought and contemplation of it agreeable, is ſo very obvious that nobody has overlooked it.

The cauſe too, why utility pleaſes, has of late been aſſigned by an ingenious and agreeable philoſopher, who joins the greateſt depth of thought to the greateſt elegance of expreſſion, and poſſeſſes the ſingular and happy talent of treating the abſtruſeſt ſubjects not only with the moſt perfect perſpicuity, but with the moſt lively eloquence. The utility of any object, according to him, pleaſes the maſter by perpetually ſuggeſting to him the pleaſure or conveniency which it is fitted to promote. Every time he looks at it, he is put in mind of this pleaſure; and the object in this manner becomes a ſource of perpetual ſatisfaction and enjoyment. The ſpectator enters by ſympathy into the ſentiments of the maſter, and neceſſarily views the object under

under the ſame agreeable aſpect. When we viſit the palaces of the great, we cannot help conceiving the ſatisfaction we ſhould enjoy if we ourſelves were the maſters, and were poſſeſſed of ſo much artful and ingeniouſly contrived accommodation. A ſimilar account is given why the appearance of inconveniency ſhould render any object diſagreeable both to the owner and to the ſpectator.

But that this fitneſs, this happy contrivance of any production of art, ſhould often be more valued, than the very end for which it was intended; and that the exact adjuſtment of the means for obtaining any conveniency or pleaſure, ſhould frequently be more regarded, than that very conveniency or pleaſure, in the attainment of which their whole merit would ſeem to conſiſt, has not, ſo far as I know, been yet taken notice of by any body. That this however is very frequently the caſe, may be obſerved in a thouſand inſtances, both in the moſt frivolous and in the moſt important concerns of human life.

When a perſon comes into his chamber, and finds the chairs all ſtanding in the middle of the room, he is angry with his ſervant, and rather than ſee them continue in that diſorder, perhaps takes the trouble himſelf to ſet them all in their places with their

backs to the wall. The whole propriety of this new ſituation ariſes from its ſuperior conveniency in leaving the floor free and diſengaged. To attain this conveniency he voluntarily puts himſelf to more trouble than all he could have ſuffered from the want of it; ſince nothing was more eaſy, than to have ſet himſelf down upon one of them, which is probably what he does when his labour is over. What he wanted therefore, it ſeems, was not ſo much this conveniency, as that arrangement of things which promotes it. Yet it is this conveniency which ultimately recommends that arrangement, and beſtows upon it the whole of its propriety and beauty.

A watch, in the ſame manner, that falls behind above two minutes in a day, is deſpiſed by one curious in watches. He ſells it perhaps for a couple of guineas, and purchaſes another at fifty, which will not loſe above a minute in a fortnight. The ſole uſe of watches, however, is to tell us what o'clock it is, and to hinder us from breaking any engagement, or ſuffering any other inconveniency by our ignorance in that particular point. But the perſon ſo nice with regard to this machine, will not always be found either more ſcrupulouſly punctual than

than other men, or more anxiouſly concerned upon any other account, to know preciſely what time of day it is. What intereſts him is not ſo much the attainment of this piece of knowledge, as the perfection of the machine which ſerves to attain it.

How many people ruin themſelves by laying out money on trinkets of frivolous utility! What pleaſes theſe lovers of toys is not ſo much the utility as the aptneſs of the machines which are fitted to promote it. All their pockets are ſtuffed with little conveniences. They contrive new pockets, unknown in the clothes of other people, in order to carry a greater number. They walk about loaded with a multitude of baubles, in weight and ſometimes in value not inferior to an ordinary Jew's-box, ſome of which may ſometimes be of ſome little uſe, but all of which might at all times be very well ſpared, and of which the whole utility is certainly not worth the fatigue of bearing the burden.

Nor is it only with regard to ſuch frivolous objects that our conduct is influenced by this principle; it is often the ſecret motive of the moſt ſerious and important purſuits of both private and public life.

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The poor man's ſon, whom heaven in its anger has viſited with ambition, when he begins to look around him, admires the condition of the rich. He finds the cottage of his father too ſmall for his accommodation, and fancies he ſhould be lodged more at his eaſe in a palace. He is diſpleaſed with being obliged to walk a-foot, or to endure the fatigue of riding on horſeback. He ſees his ſuperiors carried about in machines, and imagines that in one of theſe he could travel with leſs inconveniency. He feels himſelf naturally indolent, and willing to ſerve himſelf with his own hands as little as poſſible; and judges, that a numerous retinue of ſervants would ſave him from a great deal of trouble. He thinks if he had attained all theſe, he would ſit ſtill contentedly, and be quiet, enjoying himſelf in the thought of the happineſs and tranquillity of his ſituation. He is enchanted with the diſtant idea of this felicity. It appears in his fancy like the life of ſome ſuperior rank of beings, and, in order to arrive at it, he devotes himſelf for ever to the purſuit of wealth and greatneſs. To obtain the conveniences which theſe afford, he ſubmits in the firſt year, nay in the firſt month of his application, to more fatigue of body

body and more uneaſineſs of mind than he could have ſuffered though the whole of his life from the want of them. He ſtudies to diſtinguiſh himſelf in ſome laborious profeſſion. With the moſt unrelenting induſtry he labours night and day to acquire talents ſuperior to all his competitors. He endeavours next to bring thoſe talents into public view, and with equal aſſiduity ſolicits every opportunity of employment. For this purpoſe he makes his court to all mankind; he ſerves thoſe whom he hates, and is obſequious to thoſe whom he deſpiſes. Through the whole of his life he purſues the idea of a certain artificial and elegant repoſe which he may never arrive at, for which he ſacrifices a real tranquillity that is at all times in his power, and which, if in the extremity of old age he ſhould at laſt attain to it, he will find to be in no reſpect preferable to that humble ſecurity and contentment which he had abandoned for it. It is then, in the laſt dregs of life, his body waſted with toil and diſeaſes, his mind galled and ruffled by the memory of a thouſand injuries and diſappointments which he imagines he has met with from the injuſtice of his enemies, or from the perfidy and ingratitude of his friends, that he begins at laſt to find that wealth and greatneſs are

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mere trinkets of frivolous utility, no more adapted for procuring eaſe of body or tranquillity of mind than the tweezer-caſes of the lover of toys; and like them too, more troubleſome to the perſon who carries them about with him than all the advantages they can afford him are commodious. There is no other real difference between them, except that the conveniencies of the one are ſomewhat more obſervable than thoſe of the other. The palaces, the gardens, the equipage, the retinue of the great, are objects of which the obvious conveniency ſtrikes every body. They do not require that their maſters ſhould point out to us wherein conſiſts their utility. Of our own accord we readily enter into it, and by ſympathy enjoy and thereby applaud the ſatisfaction which they are fitted to afford him. But the curioſity of a tooth-pick, of an ear-picker, of a machine for cutting the nails, or of any other trinket of the ſame kind, is not ſo obvious. Their conveniency may perhaps be equally great, but it is not ſo ſtriking, and we do not ſo readily enter into the ſatisfaction of the man who poſſeſſes them. They are therefore leſs reaſonable ſubjects of vanity than the magnificence of wealth and greatneſs; and in this conſiſts the ſole advantage of theſe laſt. They more effec-

effectually gratify that love of diſtinction ſo natural to man. To one who was to live alone in a deſolate iſland it might be a matter of doubt, perhaps, whether a palace, or a collection of ſuch ſmall conveniencies as are commonly contained in a tweezer-caſe, would contribute moſt to his happineſs and enjoyment. If he is to live in ſociety, indeed, there can be no compariſon, becauſe in this, as in all other caſes, we conſtantly pay more regard to the ſentiments of the ſpectator, than to thoſe of the perſon principally concerned, and conſider rather how his ſituation will appear to other people, than how it will appear to himſelf. If we examine, however, why the ſpectator diſtinguiſhes with ſuch admiration the condition of the rich and the great we ſhall find that it is not ſo much upon account of the ſuperior eaſe or pleaſure which they are ſuppoſed to enjoy, as of the numberleſs artificial and elegant contrivances for promoting this eaſe or pleaſure. He does not even imagine that they are really happier than other people: but he imagines that they poſſeſs more means of happineſs. And it is the ingenious and artful adjuſtment of thoſe means to the end for which they were intended, that is the principal ſource of his admiration. But in the languor of diſeaſe

and the wearineſs of old age, the pleaſures of the vain and empty diſtinctions of greatneſs diſappear. To one in this ſituation, they are no longer capable of recommending thoſe toilſome purſuits in which they had formerly engaged him. In his heart he curſes ambition, and vainly regrets the eaſe and the indolence of youth, pleaſures which are fled for ever, and which he has fooliſhly ſacrificed for what, when he has got it can afford him no real ſatisfaction. In this miſerable aſpect does greatneſs appear to every man when reduced either by ſpleen or diſeaſe to obſerve with attention his own ſituation, and to conſider what it is that is really wanting to his happineſs. Power and riches appear then to be, what they are, enormous and operoſe machines contrived to produce a few trifling conveniencies to the body, conſiſting of ſprings the moſt nice and delicate, which muſt be kept in order with the moſt anxious attention, and which in ſpite of all our care are ready every moment to burſt into pieces, and to cruſh in their ruins their unfortunate poſſeſſor. They are immenſe fabrics, which it requires the labour of a life to raiſe, which threaten every moment to overwhelm the perſon that dwells in them, and which while they ſtand, though they may

may ſave him from ſome ſmaller inconveniencies, can protect him from none of the ſeverer inclemencies of the ſeaſon. They keep off the ſummer ſhower, not the winter ſtorm, but leave him always as much, and ſometimes more expoſed than before, to anxiety, to fear and to ſorrow; to diſeaſes, to danger, and to death.

But though this ſplenetic philoſophy, which in time of ſickneſs or low ſpirits is familiar to every man, thus entirely depreciates thoſe great objects of human deſire, when in better health and in better humour, we never fail to regard them under a more agreeable aſpect. Our imagination, which in pain and ſorrow ſeems to be confined and cooped up within our own perſons, in times of eaſe and proſperity expands itſelf to every thing around us. We are then charmed with the beauty of that accommodation which reigns in the palaces and œconomy of the great; and admire how every thing is adapted to promote their own eaſe, to prevent their wants, to gratify their wiſhes, and to amuſe and entertain their moſt frivolous deſires. If we conſider the real ſatisfaction which all theſe things are capable of affording, by itſelf and ſeparated from the beauty of that arrangement which is fitted to promote it,

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it will always appear in the higheſt degree contemptible and trifling. But we rarely view it in this abſtract and philoſophical light. We naturally confound it in our imagination with the order, the regular and harmonious movement of the ſyſtem, the machine or œconomy by means of which it is produced. The pleaſures of wealth and greatneſs, when conſidered in this complex view, ſtrike the imagination as ſomething grand and beautiful and noble, of which the attainment is well worth all the toil and anxiety which we are ſo apt to beſtow upon it.

And it is well that nature impoſes upon us in this manner. It is this deception which rouſes and keeps in continual motion the induſtry of mankind. It is this which firſt prompted them to cultivate the ground, to build houſes, to found cities and commonwealths, and to invent and improve all the ſciences and arts, which ennoble and embelliſh human life; which have entirely changed the whole face of the globe, have turned the rude foreſts of nature into agreeable and fertile plains, and made the trackleſs and barren ocean a new fund of ſubſiſtence, and the great high road of communication to the different nations of the earth. The earth by theſe

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labours of mankind has been obliged to redouble her natural fertility, and to maintain a greater multitude of inhabitants. It is to no purpose, that the proud and unfeeling landlord views his extensive fields, and without a thought for the wants of his brethren, in imagination consumes himself the whole harvest that grows upon them. The homely and vulgar proverb, that the eye is larger than the belly, never was more fully verified than with regard to him. The capacity of his stomach bears no proportion to the immensity of his desires, and will receive no more than that of the meanest peasant. The rest he is obliged to distribute among those, who prepare, in the nicest manner, that little which he himself makes use of, among those who fit up the palace in which this little is to be consumed, among those who provide and keep in order all the different baubles and trinkets, which are employed in the œconomy of greatness; all of whom thus derive from his luxury and caprice, that share of the necessaries of life, which they would in vain have expected from his humanity or his justice. The produce of the soil maintains at all times nearly that number of inhabitants which it is capable of maintaining.

The rich only ſelect from the heap what is moſt precious and agreeable. They conſume little more than the poor, and in ſpite of their natural ſelfiſhneſs and rapacity, though they mean only their own conveniency, though the ſole end which they propoſe from the labours of all the thouſands whom they employ, be the gratification of their own vain and inſatiable deſires, they divide with the poor the produce of all their improvements. They are led by an inviſible hand to make nearly the ſame diſtribution of the neceſſaries of life, which would have been made had the earth been divided into equal portions among all its inhabitants; and thus, without intending it, without knowing it, advance the intereſt of the ſociety, and afford means to the multiplication of the ſpecies. When Providence divided the earth among a few lordly maſters, it neither forgot nor abandoned thoſe who ſeemed to have been left out in the partition. Theſe laſt too enjoy their ſhare of all that it produces. In what conſtitutes the real happineſs of human life, they are in no reſpect inferior to thoſe who would ſeem ſo much above them. In eaſe of body and peace of mind, all the different ranks of life are nearly upon a level, and the beggar, who ſuns

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himſelf by the ſide of the highway, poſſeſſes that ſecurity which kings are fighting for.

The ſame principle, the ſame love of ſyſtem, the ſame regard to the beauty of order, of art, and contrivance, frequently ſerves to recommend thoſe inſtitutions which tend to promote the public welfare. When a patriot exerts himſelf for the improvement of any part of the public police, his conduct does not always ariſe from pure ſympathy with the happineſs of thoſe who are to reap the benefit of it. It is not commonly from a fellow-feeling with carriers and waggoners that a public-ſpirited man encourages the mending of high roads. When the legiſlature eſtabliſhes premiums and other encouragements to advance the linen or woollen manufactures, its conduct ſeldom proceeds from pure ſympathy with the wearer of cheap or fine cloth, and much leſs from that with the manufacturer or merchant. The perfection of police, the extenſion of trade and manufactures, are noble and magnificent objects. The contemplation of them pleaſes us, and we are intereſted in whatever can tend to advance them. They make part of the great ſyſtem of government, and the wheels of the political machine ſeem to

move with more harmony and eaſe by means of them. We take pleaſure in beholding the perfection of ſo beautiful and grand a ſyſtem, and we are uneaſy till we remove any obſtruction that can in the leaſt diſturb or encumber the regularity of its motions. All conſtitutions of government, however, are valued only in proportion as they tend to promote the happineſs of thoſe who live under them. This is their ſole uſe and end. From a certain ſpirit of ſyſtem, however, from a certain love of art and contrivance, we ſometimes ſeem to value the means more than the end, and to be eager to promote the happineſs of our fellow-creatures, rather from a view to perfect and improve a certain beautiful and orderly ſyſtem, than from any immediate ſenſe or feeling of what they either ſuffer or enjoy. There have been men of the greateſt public ſpirit, who have ſhown themſelves in other reſpects not very ſenſible to the feelings of humanity. And on the contrary, there have been men of the greateſt humanity who ſeem to have been entirely devoid of public ſpirit. Every man may find in the circle of his acquaintance inſtances both of the one kind and the other. Who had ever leſs humanity, or

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more public ſpirit, than the celebrated legiſlator of Muſcovy? The ſocial and well-natured James the Firſt of Great Britain ſeems, on the contrary, to have had ſcarce any paſſion, either for the glory or the intereſt of his country. Would you awaken the induſtry of the man who ſeems almoſt dead to ambition, it will often be to no purpoſe to deſcribe to him the happineſs of the rich and the great; to tell him that they are generally ſheltered from the ſun and the rain, that they are ſeldom hungry, that they are ſeldom cold, and that they are rarely expoſed to wearineſs, or to want of any kind. The moſt eloquent exhortation of this kind will have little effect upon him. If you would hope to ſucceed, you muſt deſcribe to him the conveniency and arrangement of the different apartments in their palaces; you muſt explain to him the propriety of their equipages, and point out to him the number, the order, and the different offices of all their attendants. If any thing is capable of making impreſſion upon him, this will. Yet all theſe things tend only to keep off the ſun and the rain, to ſave them from hunger and cold, from want and wearineſs. In the ſame manner, if you would implant public virtue in the breaſt of

him who ſeems heedleſs of the intereſt of his country, it will often be to no purpoſe to tell him, what ſuperior advantages the ſubjects of a well-governed ſtate enjoy; that they are better lodged, that they are better clothed, that they are better fed. Theſe conſiderations will commonly make no great impreſſion. You will be more likely to perſuade, if you deſcribe the great ſyſtem of public police which procures theſe advantages, if you explain the connexions and dependencies of its ſeveral parts, their mutual ſubordination to one another, and their general ſubſerviency to the happineſs of the ſociety; if you ſhow how this ſyſtem might be introduced into his own country, what it is that hinders it from taking place there at peſent, how thoſe obſtructions might be removed, and all the ſeveral wheels of the machine of government be made to move with more harmony and ſmoothneſs, without grating upon one another, or mutually retarding one another's motions. It is ſcarce poſſible that a man ſhould liſten to a diſcourſe of this kind, and not feel himſelf animated to ſome degree of public ſpirit. He will, at leaſt for the moment, feel ſome deſire to remove thoſe obſtructions, and to put into motion ſo beautiful

tiful and ſo orderly a machine. Nothing tends ſo much to promote public ſpirit as the ſtudy of politics, of the ſeveral ſyſtems of civil government, their advantages and diſadvantages, of the conſtitution of our own country, its ſituation and intereſt with regard to foreign nations, its commerce, its defence, the diſadvantages it labours under, the dangers to which it may be expoſed, how to remove the one, and how to guard againſt the other. Upon this account political diſquiſitions, if juſt, and reaſonable, and practicable, are of all the works of ſpeculation the moſt uſeful. Even the weakeſt and the worſt of them are not altogether without their utility. They ſerve at leaſt to animate the public paſſions of men, and rouſe them to ſeek out the means of promoting the happineſs of the ſociety.

CHAP. II.

Of the beauty which the appearance of Utility beſtows upon the characters and actions of men; and how far the perception of this beauty may be regarded as one of the original principles of approbation.

THE characters of men, as well as the contrivances of art, or the inſtitutions of civil government, may be fitted either to promote or to diſturb the happineſs both of the individual and of the ſociety. The prudent, the equitable, the active, reſolute, and ſober character promiſes proſperity and ſatisfaction, both to the perſon himſelf and to every one connected with him. The raſh, the inſolent, the ſlothful, effeminate, and voluptuous, on the contrary, forebodes ruin to the individual, and misfortune to all who have any thing to do with him. The firſt turn of mind has at leaſt all the beauty which can belong to the moſt perfect machine that was ever invented for promoting the moſt agreeable purpoſe: and the ſecond, all the deformity of the moſt aukward and clumſy

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contrivance. What inſtitution of government could tend ſo much to promote the happineſs of mankind as the general prevalence of wiſdom and virtue? All government is but an imperfect remedy for the deficiency of theſe. Whatever beauty, therefore, can belong to civil government upon account of its utility, muſt in a far ſuperior degree belong to theſe. On the contrary, what civil policy can be ſo ruinous and deſtructive as the vices of men? The fatal effects of bad government ariſe from nothing, but that it does not ſufficiently guard againſt the miſchiefs which human wickedneſs gives occaſion to.

This beauty and deformity which characters appear to derive from their uſefulneſs or inconveniency, are apt to ſtrike in a peculiar manner, thoſe who conſider, in an abſtract and philoſophical light, the actions and conduct of mankind. When a philoſopher goes to examine why humanity is approved of or cruelty condemned, he does not always form to himſelf, in a very clear and diſtinct manner, the conception of any one particular action either of cruelty or of humanity, but is commonly contented with the vague and indeterminate idea which the general names of thoſe qualities ſuggeſt to him. But it is

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in particular inſtances only that the propriety or impropriety, the merit or demerit of actions is very obvious and diſcernible. It is only when particular examples are given that we perceive diſtinctly either the concord or diſagreement between our own affections and thoſe of the agent, or feel a ſocial gratitude ariſe towards him in the one caſe, or a ſympathetic reſentment in the other. When we conſider virtue and vice in an abſtract and general manner, the qualities by which they excite theſe ſeveral ſentiments ſeem in a great meaſure to diſappear, and the ſentiments themſelves become leſs obvious and diſcernible. On the contrary, the happy effects of the one and the fatal conſequences of the other ſeem then to riſe up to the view, and as it were to ſtand out and diſtinguiſh themſelves from all the other qualities of either.

The ſame ingenious and agreeable author who firſt explained why utility pleaſes, has been ſo ſtruck with this view of things, as to reſolve our whole approbation of virtue into a perception of this ſpecies of beauty which reſults from the appearance of utility. No qualities of the mind, he obſerves, are approved of as virtuous, but ſuch as are uſeful or agreeable either to the perſon himſelf or to others;

others; and no qualities are diſapproved of as vicious, but ſuch as have a contrary tendency. And Nature, indeed, ſeems to have ſo happily adjuſted our ſentiments of approbation, and diſapprobation, to the convenience both of the individual and of the ſociety, that after the ſtricteſt examination it will be found, I believe, that this is univerſally the caſe. But ſtill I affirm, that it is not the view of this utility or hurtfulneſs which is either the firſt or principal ſource of our approbation and diſapprobation. Theſe ſentiments are no doubt enhanced and enlivened by the perception of the beauty or deformity which reſults from this utility or hurtfulneſs. But ſtill, I ſay, they are originally and eſſentially different from this perception.

For firſt of all, it ſeems impoſſible that the approbation of virtue ſhould be a ſentiment of the ſame kind with that by which we approve of a convenient and well-contrived building; or that we ſhould have no other reaſon for praiſing a man than that for which we commend a cheſt of drawers.

And ſecondly, it will be found, upon examination, that the uſefulneſs of any diſpoſition of mind is ſeldom the firſt ground of our approbation; and that the ſentiment of

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approbation always involves in it a ſenſe of propriety quite diſtinct from the perception of utility. We may obſerve this with regard to all the qualities which are approved of as virtuous, both thoſe, which, according to this ſyſtem are originally valued as uſeful to ourſelves, as well as thoſe which are eſteemed on account of their uſefulneſs to others.

The qualities moſt uſeful to ourſelves are, firſt of all, ſuperior reaſon and underſtanding, by which we are capable of diſcerning the remote conſequences of all our actions, and of foreſeeing the advantage or detriment which is likely to reſult from them: and ſecondly, ſelf-command, by which we are enabled to abſtain from preſent pleaſure or to endure preſent pain, in order to obtain a greater pleaſure or to avoid a greater pain in ſome future time. In the union of thoſe two qualities conſiſts the virtue of prudence, of all the virtues that which is moſt uſeful to the individual.

With regard to the firſt of thoſe qualities, it has been obſerved on a former occaſion, that ſuperior reaſon and underſtanding are originally approved of as juſt and right and accurate, and not merely as uſeful or advantageous. It is in the abſtruſer ſciences, particularly

ticularly in the higher parts of mathematics, that the greateſt and moſt admired exertions of human reaſon have been diſplayed. But the utility of thoſe ſciences, either to the individual or to the public, is not very obvious, and to prove it, requires a diſcuſſion which is not always very eaſily comprehended. It was not, therefore, their utility which firſt recommended them to the public admiration. This quality was but little inſiſted upon, till it became neceſſary to make ſome reply to the reproaches of thoſe, who, having themſelves no taſte for ſuch ſublime diſcoveries, endeavoured to depreciate them as uſeleſs.

That ſelf-command, in the ſame manner, by which we reſtrain our preſent appetites, in order to gratify them more fully upon another occaſion, is approved of, as much under the aſpect of propriety, as under that of utility. When we act in this manner, the ſentiments which influence our conduct ſeem exactly to coincide with thoſe of the ſpectator. The ſpectator does not feel the ſolicitations of our preſent appetites. To him the pleaſure which we are to enjoy a week hence, or a year hence, is juſt as intereſting as that which we are to enjoy this moment. When for the ſake of the preſent, therefore, we ſacrifice the future, our conduct appears to him

him abſurd and extravagant in the higheſt degree, and he cannot enter into the principles which influence it. On the contrary, when we abſtain from preſent pleaſure, in order to ſecure greater pleaſure to come, when we act as if the remote object intereſted us as much as that which immediately preſſes upon the ſenſes, as our affections exactly correſpond with his own, he cannot fail to approve of our behaviour: and as he knows from experience, how few are capable of this ſelf-command, he looks upon our conduct with a conſiderable degree of wonder and admiration. Hence ariſes that eminent eſteem with which all men naturally regard a ſteady perſeverance in the practice of frugality, induſtry, and application, though directed to no other purpoſe than the acquiſition of fortune. The reſolute firmneſs of the perſon who acts in this manner, and, in order to obtain a great though remote advantage, not only gives up all preſent pleaſures, but endures the greateſt labour both of mind and body, neceſſarily commands our approbation. That view of his intereſt and happineſs which appears to regulate his conduct, exactly tallies with the idea which we naturally form of it. There is the moſt perfect correſpondence between his ſen-

timents and our own, and at the ſame time, from our experience of the common weakneſs of human nature, it is a correſpondence which we could not reaſonably have expected. We not only approve, therefore, but in ſome meaſure admire his conduct, and think it worthy of a conſiderable degree of applauſe. It is the conſciouſneſs of this merited approbation and eſteem which is alone capable of ſupporting the agent in this tenour of conduct. The pleaſure which we are to enjoy ten years hence intereſts us ſo little in compariſon with that which we may enjoy to-day, the paſſion which the firſt excites, is naturally ſo weak in compariſon with that violent emotion which the ſecond is apt to give occaſion to, that the one could never be any balance to the other, unleſs it was ſupported by the ſenſe of propriety, by the conſciouſneſs that we merited the eſteem and approbation of every body, by acting in the one way, and that we became the proper objects of their contempt and deriſion by behaving in the other.

Humanity, juſtice, generoſity, and public ſpirit, are the qualities moſt uſeful to others. Wherein conſiſts the propriety of humanity and juſtice has been explained upon a former occaſion, where it was ſhewn how much our

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eſteem and approbation of thoſe qualities depended upon the concord between the affections of the agent and thoſe of the ſpectators. The propriety of generoſity and public ſpirit is founded upon the ſame principle with that of juſtice. Generoſity is different from humanity. Thoſe two qualities, which at firſt ſight ſeem ſo nearly allied, do not always belong to the ſame perſon. Humanity is the virtue of a woman, generoſity of a man. The fair-ſex, who have commonly much more tenderneſs than ours, have ſeldom ſo much generoſity. That women rarely make conſiderable donations, is an obſervation of the civil law*. Humanity conſiſts merely in the exquiſite fellow-feeling which the ſpectator entertains with the ſentiments of the perſons principally concerned, ſo as to grieve for their ſufferings, to reſent their injuries, and to rejoice at their good fortune. The moſt humane actions require no ſelf-denial, no ſelf-command, no great exertion of the ſenſe of propriety. They conſiſt only in doing what this exquiſite ſympathy would of its own accord prompt us to do. But it is otherwiſe with generoſity. We never are generous except when in ſome reſpect we

* Raro mulieres donare ſolent.

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prefer ſome other perſon to ourſelves, and ſacrifice ſome great and important intereſt of our own to an equal intereſt of a friend or of a ſuperior. The man who gives up his pretenſions to an office that was the great object of his ambition, becauſe he imagines that the ſervices of another are better entitled to it; the man who expoſes his life to defend that of his friend, which he judges to be of more importance, neither of them act from humanity, or becauſe they feel more exquiſitely what concerns that other perſon than what concerns themſelves. They both conſider thoſe oppoſite intereſts, not in the light in which they naturally appear to themſelves, but in that in which they appear to others. To every by-ſtander, the ſucceſs or preſervation of this other perſon may juſtly be more intereſting than their own; but it cannot be ſo to themſelves. When to the intereſt of this other perſon, therefore, they ſacrifice their own, they accommodate themſelves to the ſentiments of the ſpectator, and by an effort of magnanimity act according to thoſe views of things which they feel, muſt naturally occur to any third perſon. The ſoldier who throws away his life in order to defend that of his officer, would perhaps be but little affected by the death of that officer,

if it ſhould happen without any fault of his own; and a very ſmall diſaſter which had befallen himſelf might excite a much more lively ſorrow. But when he endeavours to act ſo as to deſerve applauſe, and to make the impartial ſpectator enter into the principles of his conduct, he feels, that to every body but himſelf, his own life is a trifle compared with that of his officer, and that when he ſacrifices the one to the other, he acts quite properly and agreeably to what would be the natural apprehenſions of every impartial by-ſtander.

It is the ſame caſe with the greater exertions of public ſpirit. When a young officer expoſes his life to acquire ſome inconſiderable addition to the dominions of his ſovereign, it is not becauſe the acquiſition of the new territory is, to himſelf, an object more deſirable than the preſervation of his own life. To him his own life is of infinitely more value than the conqueſt of a whole kingdom for the ſtate which he ſerves. But when he compares thoſe two objects with one another, he does not view them in the light in which they naturally appear to himſelf, but in that in which they appear to the nation he fights for. To them the ſucceſs of the war is of the higheſt importance; the

life of a private perſon of ſcarce any conſequence. When he puts himſelf in their ſituation, he immediately feels that he cannot be too prodigal of his blood, if, by ſhedding it, he can promote ſo valuable a purpoſe. In thus thwarting, from a ſenſe of duty and propriety, the ſtrongeſt of all natural propenſities, conſiſts the heroiſm of his conduct. There is many an honeſt Engliſhman, who, in his private ſtation, would be more ſeriouſly diſturbed by the loſs of a guinea, than by the loſs of Minorca, who yet, had it been in his power to defend that fortreſs, would have ſacrificed his life a thouſand times rather than, through his fault, have let it fall into the hands of the enemy. When the firſt Brutus led forth his own ſons to a capital puniſhment, becauſe they had conſpired againſt the riſing liberty of Rome, he ſacrificed what, if he had conſulted his own breaſt only, would appear to be the ſtronger to the weaker affection. Brutus ought naturally to have felt much more for the death of his own ſons, than for all that probably Rome could have ſuffered from the want of ſo great an example. But he viewed them, not with the eyes of a father, but with thoſe of a Roman citizen. He entered ſo thoroughly into the ſentiments of this laſt character, that he paid no regard

to that tie by which he himſelf was connected with them; and to a Roman citizen, the ſons even of Brutus ſeemed contemptible, when put into the balance with the ſmalleſt intereſt of Rome. In theſe and in all other caſes of this kind, our admiration is not ſo much founded upon the utility, as upon the unexpected, and on that account the great, the noble, and exalted propriety of ſuch actions. This utility, when we come to view it, beſtows upon them, undoubtedly, a new beauty, and upon that account ſtill further recommends them to our approbation. This beauty, however, is chiefly perceived by men of reflection and ſpeculation, and is by no means the quality which firſt recommends ſuch actions to the natural ſentiments of the bulk of mankind.

It is to be obſerved, that ſo far as the ſentiment of approbation ariſes from the perception of this beauty of utility, it has no reference of any kind to the ſentiments of others. If it was poſſible, therefore, that a perſon ſhould grow up to manhood without any communication with ſociety, his own actions might, notwithſtanding, be agreeable or diſagreeable to him on account of their tendency to his happineſs or diſadvantage. He might perceive a beauty of this kind in prudence,

dence, temperance, and good conduct, and a deformity in the oppoſite behaviour; he might view his own temper and character with that ſort of ſatisfaction with which we conſider a well contrived machine, in the one caſe; or with that ſort of diſtaſte and diſſatisfaction with which we regard a very aukward and clumſy contrivance, in the other. As theſe perceptions, however, are merely a matter of taſte, and have all the feebleneſs and delicacy of that ſpecies of perceptions, upon the juſtneſs of which what is properly called taſte is founded, they probably would not be much attended to by one in his ſolitary and miſerable condition. Even though they ſhould occur to him, they would by no means have the ſame effect upon him, antecedent to his connexion with ſociety, which they would have in conſequence of that connexion. He would not be caſt down with inward ſhame at the thought of this deformity; nor would he be elevated with ſecret triumph of mind from the conſciouſneſs of the contrary beauty. He would not exult from the notion of deſerving reward in the one caſe, nor tremble from the ſuſpicion of meriting puniſhment in the other. All ſuch ſentiments ſuppoſe the idea of ſome other being, who is the natural judge

of

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of the perſon that feels them; and it is only by ſympathy with the deciſions of this arbiter of his conduct, that he can conceive, either the triumph of ſelf-applauſe, or the ſhame of ſelf-condemnation.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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